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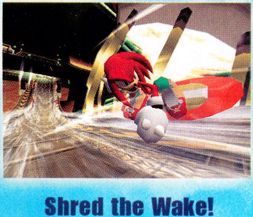

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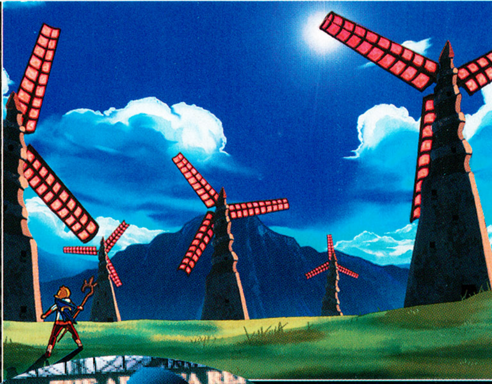

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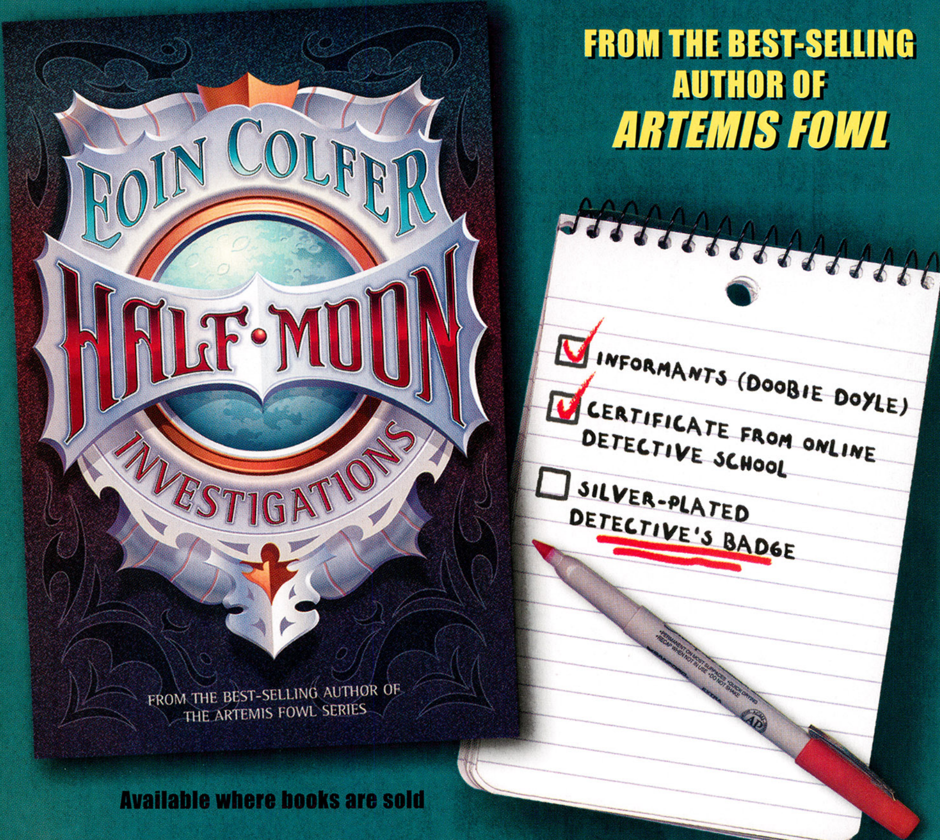
At least LostMagic isn't addicted to oil.

Unleash your inner Steinbrenner. Pg. 60

IT'S FLETCHER MOON'S FIRST BIG CASE.

IF HE SURVIVES IT . . .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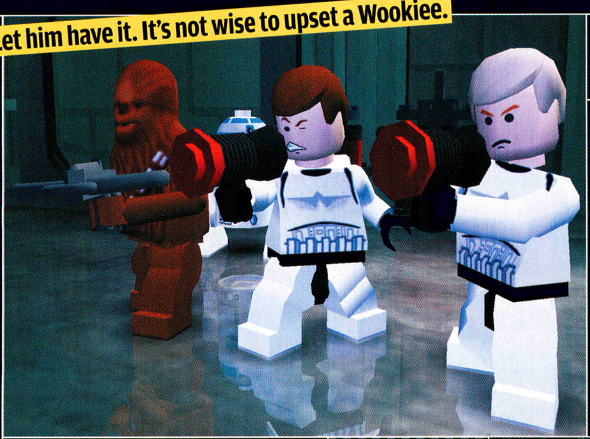
Let him have it. It's not wise to upset a Wookiee.

20

LEGO *STAR WARS* USES THE FORCE; BIG BRAIN ACADEMY SCHOOLS US; OVER THE HEDGE GOES OVER THE TOP; SUPER MONKEY BALL KEEPS ON ROLLIN'; FIFA SAYS JA TO FOOTBALL; PIRATES WALK THE PLANK

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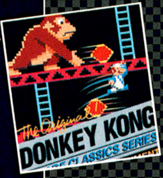

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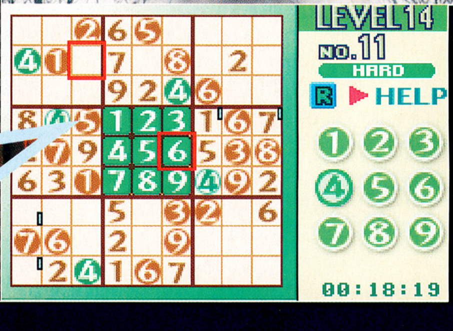
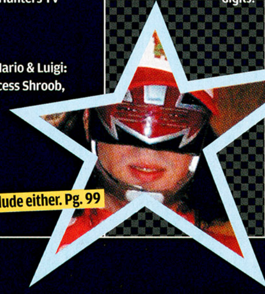



We don't get this dude either. Pg. 99

A MODERN-DAY

BATTLE

IN AN ANCIENT

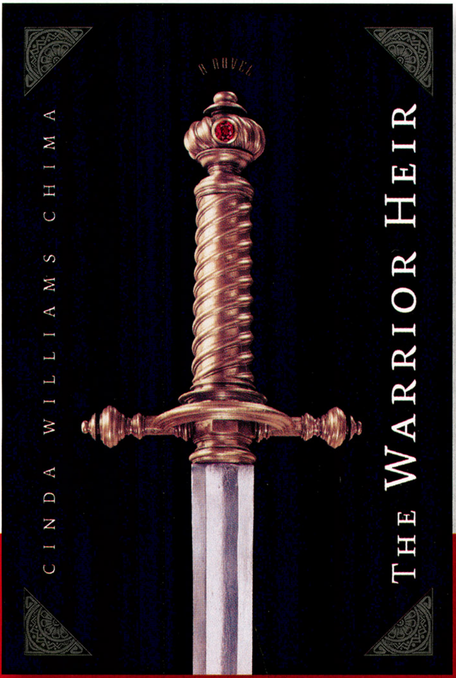
WAR

IS ABOUT TO BEGIN, AND

SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD

JACK SWIFT

IS CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE.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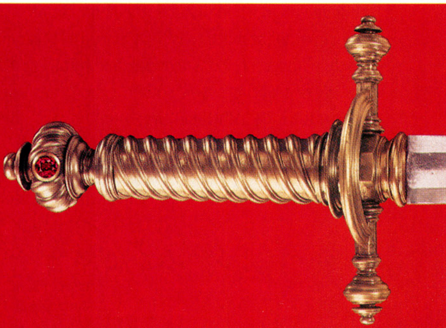
—*VOYA*



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Pulse

MARIO FRESH

The word new is probably the most misused word in marketing. It's so often applied to things that really aren't new that the word loses meaning. When I see it, I usually find myself asking skeptically, "So what's new about that?" Which brings me to New Super Mario Bros. Simply put, New Super Mario Bros. is new because it is an original work, not a port of the original 1985 NES Super Mario Bros. On the other hand, the newness of New SMB shouldn't suggest that it's a radical departure from the classic SMB. You don't squish Goombas with your thumb on the DS touch screen or yell into the mic at the Hammer Bros. to make their attacks go awry. In many ways, the game is a tribute to the original SMB—a lovingly refined mix of old and new—and the result is pure magic. But Lovingly Refined Super Mario Bros. makes for an awkward title. The naming game isn't easy. Someone once told me that the name Donkey Kong resulted from a synonym search for the words stubborn and ape. (Incidentally, you can read more about DK's origins in this month's Playback.) What if that same approach had been used to name New Super Mario Bros.? We might be shaking our heads in wonder at Super Mario Bros. Fresh (is it a game or a salad?) or Today's Super Mario Bros. (which also sounds like the game du jour). In the end, the name is not important. What matters is the game, and this one is rich in history, full of surprises, and totally addictive. We're covering several other legacy titles this month; Tetris DS, Metroid Prime Hunters, and Harvest Moon: Magical Melody are also "fresh" additions to their franchises. Whether you have a bias toward new or old, I think you'll like what you see.

Scott Pelland
Managing Editor

LETTERS

GET YOUR JUMP ON

As a person who truly appreciates old-school platformers, I'm getting discouraged. Since the GameCube came out, there's been a huge lack of platformers to continue the legacy of characters like Kirby, Donkey Kong, and Mario. Are there more platformers in the future for either the GameCube or the Revolution?

Danny N.
via the Internet

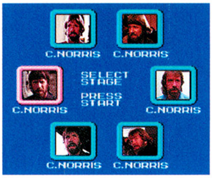
We hear ya, Danny. Platformers aren't dominant like they once were. On the GCN, Chibi-Robo should scratch your platforming itch, and Sega's got Super Monkey Ball Adventure coming later this year (see our preview on page 23). It's too soon to tell how the genre will fare on the Revolution, but it's a good bet we'll see at least a new Mario title early on. In the meantime, the DS is building a pretty solid catalog of platformers with games like Sonic Rush, Super Princess Peach, Kirby Canvas Curse, and the upcoming New Super Mario Bros.

THE WORLD WARRIOR

Little known fact: Chuck Norris was originally in the video game Street Fighter II, but was removed by beta testers when every button made him do a roundhouse kick. When asked about this glitch, Norris replied, "It's not a glitch."

Connor
via the Internet

He was also in the original Mega Man until the programmers discovered he made the game unbeatable.



MOTHERLY ADVICE

I am a 49-year-old mom of three and a hardcore Nintendo fan. In response to Joshua's letter in Volume 201, I'd say tell your mom that my youngest child has autism and I taught her how to compose sentences by writing letters in Animal Crossing. Video games aren't a waste of time. They often involve problem-solving skills, hand-eye coordination, etc. I've spent many hours with my kids playing games, and we've had a blast. Tell your mom to give it a try.

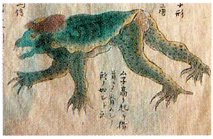
JezzeBell
via the Internet

MARIO'S ANCIENT FOES

I've been reading NP for only a short time now, but I decided I was already past due to send in a letter. I've studied Japanese mythology a bit, and I've noticed that Kappas seem an awfully lot like Koopas from the Super Mario series.

MarioFanaticXV
via the Internet

The creatures MarioFanaticXV is referring to are water imps found in Japanese folklore. Like Koopas, they were said to be mischievous troublemakers, and often bore a resemblance to tortoises (as in the drawing below).



MARRIED LIFE

I am still playing Harvest Moon: Friends of Mineral Town. Though my character's wife goes to work every day, she never brings home money. And she never changes; it's the same routine every day. Will my wife ever bring home a paycheck?

Nathan
via the Internet

Sounds like a realistic portrayal of marriage to us. That's a joke! We kid the wives!

CHEATING DEATH

I've just completed Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow and it struck me that there is a major plot hole. How exactly can you kill Death? I don't mean what's the strategy, I mean how is it physically possible to do so? The impossibilities are endless! You [shouldn't be able] to kill Death itself! And after you kill Death, things can still die! If you kill Death (it still boggles the mind), then how can something die? There's no more death! It's a great game, and the fact that you can fight and kill Death is cool, but it's just not physically possible!

Kenny M.
via the Internet

Soma Cruz is just that badass. Rumor has it he trained with Chuck Norris.

SAVING GRACE

I'm looking forward to the Revolution, but I have a question that may affect whether or not I buy the system. Will it be able to use memory cards from the GCN? I know it plays GCN games, but I don't want to lose all my save data and have to start over again.

Sam F.
Michigan

The Revolution will indeed boast two GCN Memory Card slots. Offering backward compatibility without allowing players to access their old saves would be kind of lame.

YOUR NAME IN PRINT!

I have written to you guys a million times. What do I have to do to get one of my letters printed in the magazine?

George O.
via the Internet

There are no hard and fast rules for getting your letter in the magazine (though good spelling and grammar always help), but we can offer a few guidelines for what not to do. First, don't ask us when Twilight Princess is coming out or how much the Revolution is going to cost. We don't know. As soon as we find out, rest assured you'll see it in the News section. Second, we tend not to print letters that simply cheerlead for Nintendo. We all love the big N, but such letters usually aren't terribly interesting. Nor are those that bash the other guys. Finally, we're a magazine; we don't actually publish or develop games. So no, we can't make a new Dragon Ball Z for the DS. All we can do is mock it.

RESPECT YOUR ELDERS

I've been noticing that a couple of you guys are looking "past your prime," particularly Chris S.

Brian P.
via the Internet

How dare you? Chris and the rest of the NP crew are as spry as ever.

WHEN'S SHUFFLEBOARD?

Can you guys put a group picture of the NP crew in the magazine? Don't ask why.

Anonymous
via the Internet

Here ya go:

The NP crew

I have some concerns about the Revolution. While I welcome the innovation that the new controller will undoubtedly bring, I'm worried that it will come at the expense of traditional genres. I like platformers, RPGs, fighting games, etc. as they are now, and I don't necessarily want to give up those kinds of experiences. And although I think WarioWare will work great on the Revolution, I'm afraid that developers will try to force all of my favorite franchises to use the controller, and for some of them, it just doesn't make sense. What do you guys think?

Bill R.
via the Internet

A few of us shared your concerns, Bill, but the DS has assuaged those fears somewhat. While touch-screen control was shoehorned into almost every game early on, developers now do a much better job of either using it to truly enhance gameplay—Trauma Center, Nintendogs—or leaving it out in games that don't need it—Castlevania, Advance Wars, Mario & Luigi. We suspect the Revolution will play out much the same way.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

I would like to know if, at the current rate, a job position would be available for a person to actually write articles for Nintendo Power in about, say, 10 years. That would give me time to get through high school and get a university degree.

Chris C.
via the Internet

From the looks of us, we'd say the chances are pretty good.

HARD-TO-FIND GEMS

I recently heard that both Trauma Center: Under the Knife and Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney have been discontinued in North America. Is that true?

Phil
via the Internet

Although both games can be pretty difficult to track down, neither one has been discontinued. According to an Atlus representative, shipments of Trauma Center continue to go out. You'll probably have the best luck finding a copy at specialty stores like EB and GameStop. As for Phoenix Wright, Capcom recommends talking to your local retailers and asking them to reorder the game.

THE DEFINITION OF OBSCURE

I wanted to bring up three NES games from my childhood that I would love to see [made available on the Revolution's virtual console]. They are The Krion Conquest, Amagon, and The Guardian Legend. If you decide to do this, please add a continue option to The Krion Conquest and a save function to The Guardian Legend. Please?

Will S.
via the Internet

If any of those titles (published by Vic Tokai, Sammy, and Broderbund, respectively) make it to the virtual console, we will eat not only our hats, but our pants, as well.

THE WORM (RE)TURNS?

I would like to say that I really enjoyed [Volume 201's Playback] feature on Earthworm Jim. Do you think that the EWJ cartoon series will ever be released on DVD? And are there any plans for another Jim game?

Lucas D.
via the Internet

There's been no official word, but Shiny recently hinted that it was working on a new game that would hearken back to the developer's early days. Since Earthworm Jim was the company's first title, that certainly seems like a strong possibility. As for the cartoon series, Universal (who owns the rights to the show), tragically, has no plans for a DVD release.

MISSING BLOB

I've been wondering what happened to the DS remake of A Boy and His Blob. I thought it was supposed to come out last November. Has the game been axed or just brutally delayed?

Joe M.
via the Internet

We're not sure. Majesco hasn't said a word about the game since it was first announced. Maybe we'll see something at E3 in May.

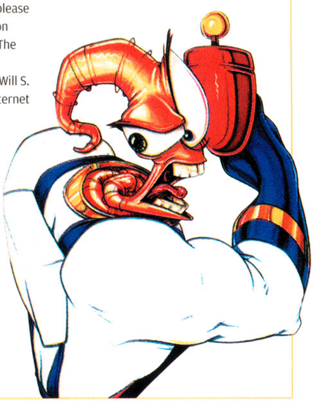
THE ANSWER IS ALWAYS THE SAME

I have a bunch of random questions I was hoping you would be able to answer:

1) Who would win in a fight between Yoda, Gollum, and Captain Kirk?
2) How come Link can't talk?
3) What is the meaning of life?

Marsmegametroid
via the Internet

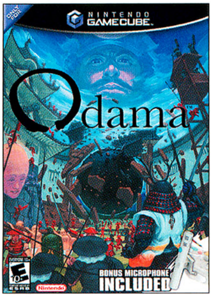
1) Captain Kirk. Never bet against the Shatner. Unless he's fighting Chuck Norris.
2) He received a roundhouse kick to the throat from an unidentified bearded man back in the '80s.
3) The meaning of life is Chuck Norris.



EASY MONEY

Ten bucks says that Nintendo is running out of game ideas. Try and prove me wrong. I dare ya.

youngster
via the Internet



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MORE HORROR

I love Resident Evil: Deadly Silence. I was wondering (and I really hope this happens), will we be seeing a similar remake of Resident Evil 2? I love that game, and I thought if it could be made for the N64, then it could certainly be brought to the DS.

Christopher G.
via the Internet

If Deadly Silence sells well, it seems like a no-brainer. Capcom is never one to shy away from putting its games on as many platforms as possible. We'd love to see both 2 and 3 remade on the DS.

IT'D SELL HUGE IN GERMANY

Is there going to be a Metroid Prime 3 for the Revolution? Also, if Revolution is just a code name, what is the system ultimately going to be called?

Codi H.
via the Internet

At last year's E3, Nintendo announced that a new Metroid Prime was indeed in development for Revolution. Hopefully we'll get our hands on it at this year's show. To answer your second question, we don't know what the console's final name will be, but we're hoping for the Nintendo Hasselhoff.

VOCAL FANS

Last year, I asked three fellow UCLA students if they loved the NES and our boy Mario as much as I did. The results are as follows: www.youtube.com/watch?v=wT8JU8X2 wbo. We created the Jumpmen, a group dedicated to the best that the NES gave to us. The performance you see [at that site] is a sold-out, 4,500-person event at the Los Angeles Tennis Center. Right now, we're trying to take it to the next level, and we're booking more performances.

Hanibal S.
via the Internet

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

At one time, I was one of those people who wouldn't give certain genres a chance. But over time, I've had games open my eyes to all of the various genres. With first-person shooters, it was GoldenEye. Meteos piqued my interest in puzzle games. I began to like racing games thanks to Mario Kart. I guess all I'm trying to say is that gamers should give every genre a chance.

Ted W.
via the Internet

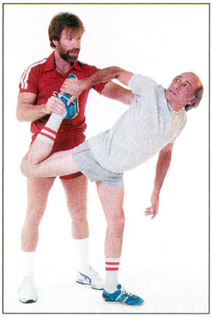
We couldn't agree more, Ted. By avoiding a particular genre completely, you'll miss out on some great games. It's always good to give something new a try once in a while. You might just be surprised.

THE NEXT BEST THING

Can you show us some sweet pictures from the new Zelda game?

Jay Y.
via the Internet

No, but we can show you a sweet picture of Chuck Norris about to break a man in half with his bare hands.



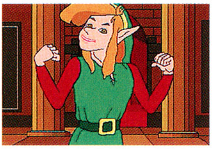
THE "LEGEND" OF ZELDA

I'm currently trying to obtain a copy of every Zelda game in existence. My friend insists that I must get the CD-i games for this to be accomplished. I can't persuade him that they don't count, but maybe you can.

Zora F.
via the Internet

Since the Zelda CD-i games do (unfortunately) exist, your friend is technically right. Maybe you should change your goal from "obtaining every Zelda game in existence" to "obtaining every Zelda game in which Link doesn't look like he just chugged a gallon of drain cleaner."

CORRECTOR'S CORNER



I found a [mistake] in Volume 201. On page 21, it said, "You can begin your life in Flower Bud Village as either a boy or a girl, living on one of three properties—both firsts for the series." While the second [part] is true, the first overlooks Harvest Moon 2 and 3 for the Game Boy Color. In both of those games, you can choose to play as either a boy or a girl.

Alejandro
via the Internet

I noticed a mistake in Volume 201. In the art contest, you said that Crystalfairy12 is the first repeat winner. Actually, she is the second. Goddesszelda is the first. She won both the Fire Emblem and the Mario Kart contests.

RMT
via the Internet

FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE

I'm really angry at you guys. You should make Zelda games for the DS. I'm a huge Zelda fan. Please make at least one Zelda game for the DS with a really, really long storyline. OK?

Justin K.
via the Internet

We would, but we're busy adding a continue option to The Krion Conquest and a save function to The Guardian Legend.

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Or via carrier pigeon at:

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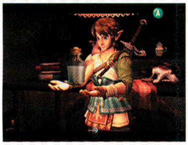
MOST WANTED

Go to nintendo.com to vote for your most-wanted games and let your voice be heard!



>NINTENDO GAMECUBE

1. The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess
2. Baten Kaitos II
3. Harvest Moon: Magical Melody
4. LEGO Star Wars: The Original Trilogy
5. Super Monkey Ball Adventure

HP
TP
ENEMY
Cress 1618 146
Mint 850 175
Claus 960 3
Arche 891 43
Gnome

>GAME BOY ADVANCE

1. Tales of Phantasia
2. LEGO Star Wars: The Original Trilogy
3. Yggdra Union
4. Metal Slug 1
5. X-Men: The Official Game

>NINTENDO DS

1. New Super Mario Bros.
2. Metroid Prime Hunters
3. Children of Mana
4. Tetris DS
5. LostMagic

TOP SELLERS

>NINTENDO GAMECUBE

We think that Mario guy might be kind of popular. Half of the games on this list (the top half) star Nintendo's beloved plumber.

1. Super Mario Strikers
2. Mario Kart: Double Dash!!
3. Mario Party 7
4. Super Smash Bros. Melee
5. Super Mario Sunshine
6. LEGO *Star Wars*
7. Mega Man X Collection
8. Shadow the Hedgehog
9. Animal Crossing
10. Madden NFL 06

TOP SELLERS

>GAME BOY ADVANCE

Fun fact: NP's own Chris Shepperd got his degree from the Duel Academy. He can kill a man from 20 paces just by flicking a card at him.

Sorry Shepperd! My Spear Dragon is gonna attack Darkfire Soldier !

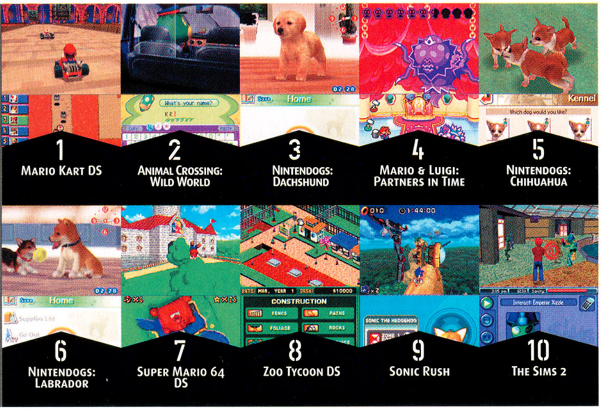
The school of hard knocks.

1. Yu-Gi-Oh! GX Duel Academy
2. Pokémon Emerald
3. Super Mario Advance 4: Super Mario Bros. 3
4. Donkey Kong Country 3
5. Final Fantasy IV Advance
6. LEGO *Star Wars*
7. The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
8. Madagascar: Operation Penguin
9. Disney's Kim Possible 3: Team Possible
10. That's So Raven 2: Supernatural Style

TOP SELLERS

>NINTENDO DS

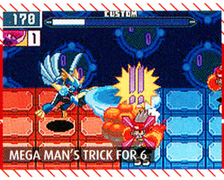
Wi-Fi is running wild. Next up: Tetris and LostMagic.



1. Mario Kart DS
2. Animal Crossing: Wild World
3. Nintendogs: Dachshund
4. Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time
5. Nintendogs: Chihuahua
6. Nintendogs: Labrador
7. Super Mario 64 DS
8. Zoo Tycoon DS
9. Sonic Rush
10. The Sims 2

What's your name?
Home
Kennel
Which dog would you like?
Supplies List
Go Out
CONSTRUCTION
FENCE
PATHS
FOLIAGE
ROCKS
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
Interact: Emperor Xizzle

Sales data courtesy of the NPDFunworld TRSTS Video Game Source.



MEGA MAN'S TRICK FOR 6

LESS STREET, MORE FIFA

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE

Iwata to Disrupt Development

It's not just developers at GDC that can't wait to hear what Nintendo's president Satoru Iwata will say on March 23, when he'll speak about "Disrupting Development"—it's the whole world. Stay tuned to nintendo.com for all the essential details.

BIG MACHINES, SMALL PACKAGE

Crush Control

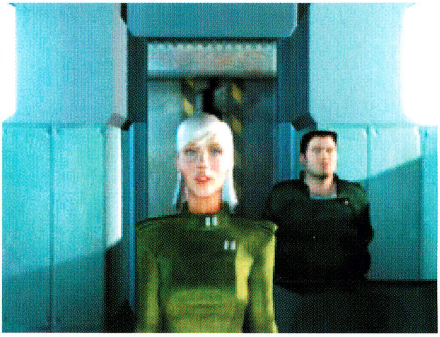
MechAssault: Phantom War brings 100 tons of power and years of BattleTech history to the DS.

From the early 3-D PC MechWarrior series to the RTS heyday of MechCommander, the BattleTech universe has been a gaming fixture for close to two decades. Its latest incarnation, MechAssault, delivers 32nd-century combat to Nintendo's 21st-century handheld with Majesco's Phantom War for the DS. As MechWarrior Vallen Bryce, you must address a galaxy-wide crisis when the Republic of Sphere's Hyperpulse Generators (interstellar communication devices circa 3134) go dark and the worlds prepare for war. Over the course of nine single-player campaign missions, you go behind enemy lines, commandeer two dozen BattleMechs, turrets, and tanks, and attempt to turn the generators into enemy-blasting weapons. You're the last line of defense before the Republic is obliterated.

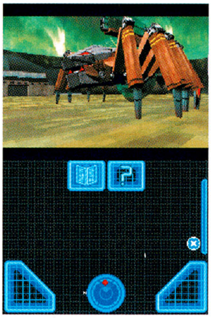
The game's two-screen format lets you view your walking tank from third-person perspective while you interact with the cockpit panel via touch control: Hack into an enemy 'Mech, switch weapons, check battle techniques, and even eject from your 'Mech by touching your stylus to the screen.

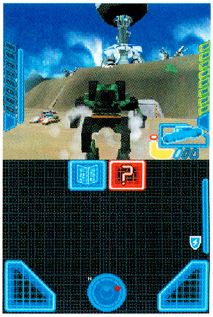
Multiplayer options are plentiful. Up to four players can connect wirelessly and engage in four types of combat scenarios in six huge locations. Destruction mode, Grinder mode, and Control King are deathmatch variations that have every MechWarrior fighting for survival. Kontrol Phreak is a king-of-the-hill-style game that involves territory defense. As you advance, you unlock new 'Mechs, maps, and weapons, all meticulously crafted from BattleTech fiction.

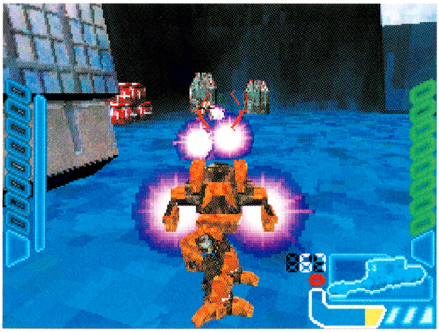
The game is slated for early-May release. Watch for more info in NP after we get our hands on a preview build. —George S.

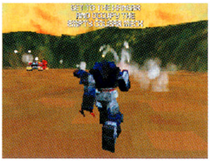


After 60 years of peace, a virus strikes the Republic of Sphere's communication system. You have orders to fix the problem or die trying.

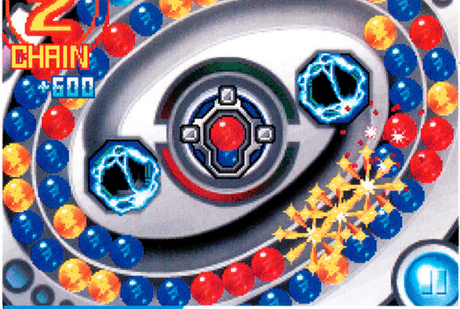








The 3-D view of BattleMechs on a futuristic landscape should be enough to make any MechWarrior fan remember the good old days. Classic 'Mechs include the Cougar and the Mad Cat.



MARBLES FOR MADMEN

Tracks Attract

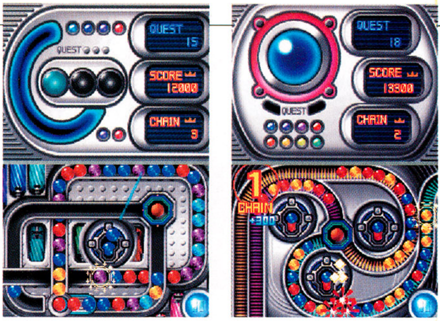
Nintendo's not done re-energizing puzzle gaming. Tetris DS and Pokémon Trozei will soon have attractive company in Magnetica.

The DS is just what the doctor ordered to bring puzzle games back to life. Ever since Meteos's debut, Nintendo has continued its push to make puzzle games fresh. Next in the queue: Magnetica, which is based on the gameplay of a 1998 Japanese arcade game known as Puzz Loop. The core concept of that game was to fire marbles that pop up from a launcher into a line of marbles rolling down a track. The marble you fire will settle in between the two marbles it touches, unless it's the third in a like-color series, which causes all three to vanish.

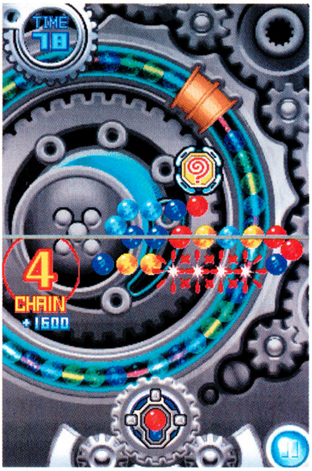
Remade with touch control by Mitchell, the arcade game's developer, Magnetica results in a more vivid take on Puzz Loop. Instead of firing marbles, the player flings them from the launcher with the stylus. The game ends if the rolling marbles reach the end of the track, so Magnetica demands a seriously quick hand with the stylus.

Magnetica's Challenge mode will press the player to master the basics on four simple tracks, while Quest mode treks through chains of missions set on increasingly complex fields. Puzzle mode will offer 60 thinking challenges that help players learn how to set up combos, a necessity for survival in the action-oriented modes. The game will also support two-player DS Download Play in Vs. mode, which adds sabotage items like the foe fogging ion cloud.

You'll have a few months to hammer away at Nintendo's more-recent puzzle entries; Magnetica won't hit stores until June 5. —Steven G.



Flinging marbles in Quest mode takes on difficult dimensions as the tracks take on more-complex shapes. The projectiles fall into place where they first touch marbles, so attacking some key stretches of the line can be incredibly difficult.



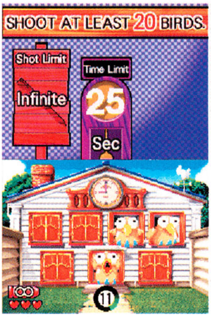
In Quest mode's boss fights, you'll have to use marbles to blast apart a creature that floats around both screens as marble tentacles sway around its body. If the boss roams too low and grabs your launcher with a tentacle, the mission is over—your reflexes must be extremely quick.

THE STYLUS IS THE WEAPON

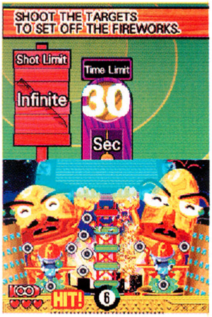
No Light Gun Needed

The DS adaptation of Namco's lighthearted shooting-gallery series puts the "point" in Point Blank.

Fans of carnival-style shooting galleries have been having a blast with Namco's Point Blank games for years, and soon they'll get to experience its fire-and-forget fun in a whole new way on Nintendo DS. Unlike the old arcade and PlayStation installments, this edition eschews the series' light-gun ways in favor of shooting at targets by tapping the touch screen. But in other regards, this is still the cult hit that's been so successful, complete with quirky sense of humor and variety of fast-paced shooting challenges—kind of like WarioWare with a shooting twist. With more than 50 stages (including new levels and stages drawn from the series' previous three installments) and five modes (such as arcade and versus), Point Blank aims to please. Set your sights on it in June 2006. —Chris H.



Colorful, goofy shooting challenges will put your hand-eye coordination to the test.



Just who are those weird-looking mustachioed fellows? They're Point Blank's mascots, of course.

FAR & WIDE

Handheld's Best Friend

Nintendogs runs circles around the rest of the pack.

The industry-peer voters behind the annual Interactive Achievement Awards had their say about the best handheld game of '05 in February, awarding Nintendogs. That's major kudos given the stiff competition in the handheld arena.

Pikachu Phone Fun

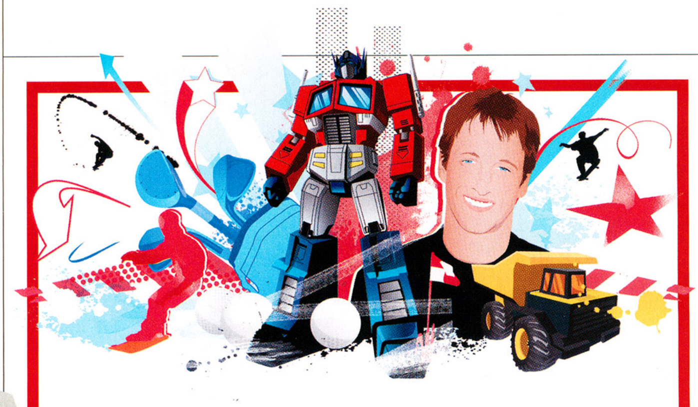
Look for your favorite Pokémon, coming to a cell phone near you.

Pokémon USA and mobile-phone-content maker Zingy are teaming up to bring Pokémon wallpapers, ringtones, and other features to your cell phone. Check out pokemon.com/mobile for all the details.

Gamer Parents?

They exist, says a study released by the Entertainment Software Association.

According to the study, "gamer parents" spend an average of 19 hours each month playing games, and 80% of them game with their kids upwards of 9 hours a month. Where have these wonderful people been all our lives? Oh, yeah: I guess some of us *are* them by this point.



The Big News. In Short.

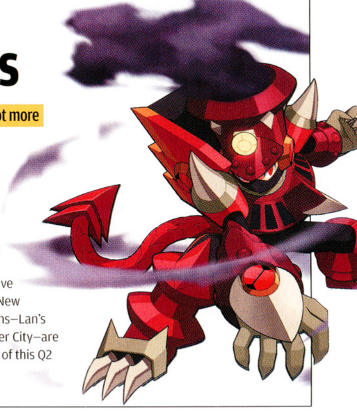
A small sound bite in Activision's quarterly-earnings conference call is great news for Tony Hawk fans: The publisher's working on a completely new take on the franchise; it'll be called **Tony Hawk's Downhill Jam**. It's due for unspecified platforms during Activision's next fiscal year, which starts in April. . . Hasbro has announced that it's given Activision global development (excluding Japan) rights for **Transformers**. Fans of the widely worshipped series can expect to see the first games from the deal emerge in sync with the July 2007 live-action Transformers movie. Also on the docket for Hasbro development: **Tonka** and My Little Pony for the GBA, due from THQ later this year. . . EA's **Tiger Woods** series has been synonymous with golf-game quality, and the publisher disclosed in its mid-February earnings report that it's got Tiger signed for six more games. . . As soon as snowboarding halfpipe athlete **Shaun White** claimed the gold for the US at Turin, Ubisoft announced that it's working with the 19-year-old on video games for current and next-gen consoles, due in 2007. . . Add two more flicks to the list of computer-animated movies with game versions on the way: The chill-filled **Monster House** will haunt the GCN, DS, and GBA in July (THQ), and rat comedy **Flushed Away** will spill onto the DS and GBA in November (D3PA).

—Steven G.

JACK IN, MEGA MAN!

Unleash the Beasts

Mega Man and Lan face powerful new cyberbeasts and a whole lot more in two versions of Mega Man Battle Network 6 on GBA.



Another year, another Mega Man Battle Network . . . but the upgrades made to this edition of Capcom's seminal GBA series might be the most significant yet. Although the basic strategy/action/RPG gameplay remains intact, two extremely powerful Cybeasts—Falzar the bird, and Gregar the wolf—now take center stage. Depending on whether you're playing the Cybeast Falzar or Cybeast Gregar version of MMBN6, Mega Man will contain a different Cybeast inside him, allowing him to "Beast Out" and use the latent power to aid him in battle. The beast forms can be further augmented with the abilities of Link Navis (five exclusive to each version). New characters and new locations—Lan's family has relocated to Cyber City—are among the other highlights of this Q2 2006 release. —Chris H.

NEWS FROM JAPAN!

Lite Years Ahead?

The DS phenomenon continues to grow each month, but Nintendo's recent press conference revealed further big developments due soon in Japan.

The launch of the DS Lite in Japan is just the start of a busy spring for the handheld system, as revealed during a spring-preview conference held for the Japanese press in February. What's coming for the apparently DS-insatiable crowds across the ocean? Consider these major highlights from the press event, then envy those lucky DS gamers in The Land of the Rising Sun.

The Experiment Pays Off

Touch! Generations, started early last year as a library to which nongamers might be attracted, has become a runaway success in Japan. Sales for several of the titles from the library's first year in 2005 have continued to soar to new heights in 2006: Brain Age: 1.8 million; Brain Age 2: 1.54 million; and Big Brain Academy: 1.14 million. These join several games, including Mario Kart DS and Animal Crossing: Wild World, that have also surpassed the million-selling mark on the DS.

The Reason for the Season

Nintendo cemented many release dates for much-anticipated spring games like New Super Mario Bros. and Tetris DS, plus several for titles in the Touch! Generations library, such as a kanji dictionary and a DS-based cookbook. Nintendo also emphasized the high volume of DS games from other publishers due during spring, including much-talked-about titles like Children of Mana, Xenosaga I & II, Contact, Tenchu DS, Tales of the Tempest, Winning Eleven, Dynasty Warriors DS, and ASH: Archaic Sealed Heat. Rounding out the lineup announcement, Nintendo said that Square Enix was planning a summer launch for Final Fantasy III, and reiterated that Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles and a Dragon Quest Monsters game were in the works for DS.

Surfing and Tuning In

In one of the most surprising revelations of the event, Nintendo president Satoru Iwata announced that Nintendo would soon let DS owners surf the Web with a DS-based version of the popular Opera browser. The touch-based DS browser, which will hit Japan in June, will enable surfers to view zoomed-in and zoomed-out perspectives of a Web page simultaneously. Iwata also announced that the Digital Broadcast Card for the DS, which will enable multichannel reception of digital television broadcasts, would be released before year-end.

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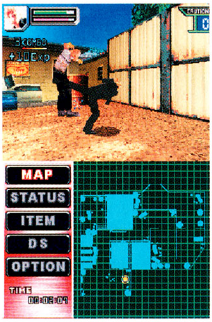
Source Code:NINM6

SPY KID

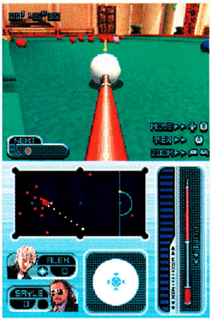
Global Espionage

Europe's newest spy sensation, Alex Rider, is on his way to the big screen and two small screens with Stormbreaker for DS.

It's only a matter of time before Anthony Horowitz's *Alex Rider* book series takes off in North America, and a big-budget movie starring Ewan McGregor, Mickey Rourke, and Alicia Silverstone is sure to help speed things along. *Stormbreaker*, the first book in the series, will be the subject of the movie, and THQ recently announced plans for a Stormbreaker Nintendo DS game to accompany the movie's release. Stormbreaker's story about a teenage boy turned special agent will likely translate well to the game world—Alex has a propensity for getting himself into situations that he has to sneak, race, and fight his way out of. THQ promises that the title will have a wide variety of levels and gameplay modes—we'll find out for sure this August. —Andy M.



In addition to hand-to-hand combat, Alex Rider's DS debut will include stealth and racing levels.



Touch control will likely play a big part in Stormbreaker's various gadget-based minigames.

WE ARE THE WORLD

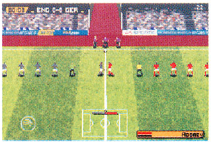
FIFA 2006 Redux

EA's soccer machine keeps rolling with handheld follow-ups to their 2006 FIFA titles. This time, they take on the world.

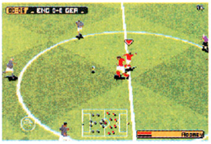
It's a big event in international-sports gaming when EA releases FIFA titles. The games are consistently among the best and most ambitious sports sims. This year, the "it's in the game" makers are cutting into their FIFA cycle with April releases dedicated to the summer's World Cup.

Like the GCN version of 2006 FIFA World Cup (see a full preview on page 23), the GBA and DS titles field teams from 127 countries and give nearly 100 of the world's greatest players superstar treatment with signature moves and likenesses. EA promises advancements in passing and shooting, plus penalty kicks.

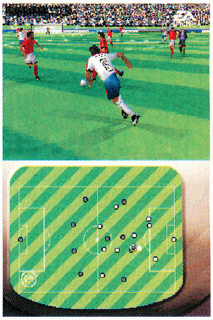
The DS version has five Skill Challenges, including a World Cup trivia test. The GBA rendition boasts a Penalty Shootout Skill Challenge. Next month we'll bring you reviews of all three versions. —George S.



The stage is set and the games are about to begin. The GBA and DS games offer 12 official stadiums.



Revamped physics make World Cup the most realistic GBA FIFA title yet.



Touch Screen Tactics lets you adjust formations and strategies with a flick of your stylus in the DS title.

DON'T-MISS Calendar

April marks a historic month on the Nintendo scene: A gaming genius will bring us his strangest, coolest game yet, and Brain Age will change the way you think about the DS.

3-28

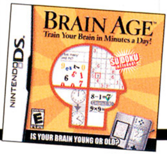
The best Harvest Moon ever? That's been the buzz from Japan. We put two NP staffers to work on Harvest Moon: Magical Melody's farm and in its mines. We even gave them time to mix with country fellers. HM fans, check out their verdict for the GCN game on page 89.

4-10

To arms! Odama is upon us! And it's about time. Those of us who bow before Yoot Saito know that the designer makes a new game at the glacial pace of true genius. Is his voice-controlled military-pinball game worth the wait? See how Odama fares on page 92.

4-17

Think your own thoughts. Still can't make heads or tails of Brain Age? Don't let NP sway you. Before the April 17 release date take your DS to a store with a DS Download Station, nab a free demo, and try it for yourself.


NINTENDO DS
BRAIN AGE
Train Your Brain in Minutes a Day!
SUDOKU
IS YOUR BRAIN YOUNG OR OLD?

4-25

Feel good about feeling guilty. Guilty Gear has always been about major attitude. And Guilty Gear: Dust Strikers adds major altitude, using both DS screens to take the 2-D fighter higher than any other. We just hope the fighters don't get nosebleeds and call for a time out.

GAME WATCH FORECAST

Note to Conspiracy! Where's that Johnny Rocketfingers game you announced for-ev-er ago? Well, maybe we'll see the totally inappropriate antihero at E3. With some big games breaking loose in advance of the big show, The Forecast is heating up.

ANNOUNCED
IN DEVELOPMENT
READY FOR RELEASE

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	●●●
GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	●●● —NEW GAMES ADDED TO THE LIST
NINTENDO GAMECUBE		
2006 FIFA World Cup	EA	●●○
Barnyard	THQ	●●○
Baten Kaitos II	Nintendo	●●○
Cars	THQ	●○○
FIFA Street 2	EA	●●●
Greg Hastings' Tournament Paintball	Activision	●○○
Harvest Moon: Magical Melody	Natsume	●●●
Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	VU Games	●●●
Kao the Kangaroo: Round 2	Atari	●●●
Kirby*	Nintendo	●●○
The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess	Nintendo	●●○
LEGO *Star Wars* : The Original Trilogy	LucasArts	●○○
Major League Baseball 2K6	2K Sports	●○○
Mini-Golf Mayhem	Crave	●○○
Monster House	THQ	●○○
The Movies	TBD	●●○
Naruto: Clash of Ninja	Tomy/D3PA	●●●
Naruto: Clash of Ninja 2	Tomy/D3PA	●●○
Odama	Nintendo	●●●
Over the Hedge	THQ	●●○
Pac-Man World Rally	Namco	●●○
Rampage: Total Destruction	Midway	●●○
Sonic Riders	Sega	●●●
Super Monkey Ball Adventure	Sega	●●○
Teen Titans	Majesco	●●○
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Double Agent	Ubisoft	●●○
World Championship Poker	Crave	●●○
X-Men: The Official Game	Activision	●●○
GAME BOY ADVANCE		
2006 FIFA World Cup	EA	●●○
Barnyard	THQ	●●○
Cars	THQ	●○○
Catz	Ubisoft	●○○
Dr. Sudoku	Mastiff	●●●
Dragon Ball: Advanced Adventure	Atari	●●●
Flushed Away	D3PA	●○○
Hamtaro: Rainbow Rescue	Nintendo	●○○
Hardcore Pool	Telegames	●●○
Hugo: Bukkazoom	Namco	●●○
Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	VU Games	●●●
Legend of the River King Advance	Natsume	●●○
LEGO *Star Wars* : The Original Trilogy	LucasArts	●○○
Let's Ride! Dreamer	THQ	●●●
Mega Man Anniversary Collection	Capcom	●●○
Mega Man Battle Network 6: Cybeast Falzar & Cybeast Gregar Versions	Capcom	●●○
Metal Slug	SNK	●●○
Monster House	THQ	●○○
My Little Pony*	THQ	●○○
Naruto 2*	Tomy/D3PA	●○○
Naruto: Ninja Council	Tomy/D3PA	●●●
Over the Hedge	THQ	●●○
Paws & Claws Resort	THQ	●●●
Pirate Battle	Orbital	●●○
The Proud Family	Disney	●●○
Santa Claus Saves the Earth	Telegames	●●○
Scurge: Hive	Orbital	●●○
Stormbreaker	THQ	●○○
Super Robot Monkey Team Hyperforce Go!	Disney	●○○
Tonka*	THQ	●○○
Top Spin 2	2K Sports	●●●
The Tower SP	Sega	●●●
Ultimate Pocket Games	Telegames	●●○
Ultimate Puzzle Games	Telegames	●●○
Ultimate Table Games	Telegames	●●○
The Wild	Disney	●●○
World Poker Tour 2K6	2K Sports	●○○
World Reborn	Destination	●●○
X-Bladez: Inline Skater	Crave	●●○
X-Men: The Official Game	Activision	●●○
Xyanide	Playlogic	●○○
Yggdra Union	Atlus	●●○
NINTENDO DS		
2006 FIFA World Cup	EA	●●○
A Boy and His Blob	Majesco	●●○
Barnyard	THQ	●○○
Big Brain Academy	Nintendo	●●○
Boktai*	Konami	●○○
Brain Age: Train Your Brain in Minutes a Day	Nintendo	●●○
Brain Twisting Game Vol. 1*	Aruze	●●○
Cars	THQ	●○○
Children of Mana	Square Enix	●●○
ChoroQ DS	Atlus	●○○
Dragon Quest Monsters*	Square Enix	●○○
Dynasty Warriors*	Koei	●●○
Egg Monster Heroes	Square Enix	●●○
Europa Universalis II	Pocket PC	●●○
FIFA Street 2	EA	●●●
Final Fantasy III	Square Enix	●●○
Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles*	Square Enix	●○○
Flushed Away	D3PA	●○○
Fushigi No Dungeon*	Chun Soft	●○○
The Game of Life DS	Atlus	●○○
Guilty Gear Dust Strikers	Majesco	●●○
Harvest Moon DS	Natsume	●●○
Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi*	D3PA	●○○
Historical Simulation Game*	Koei	●○○
Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	VU Games	●●●
Intern Tendo Dokuta	Spike	●●○
Jam with the Band*	Nintendo	●●○
Johnny Rocketfingers	Conspiracy	●○○
Legend of the River King*	Natsume	●○○
The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords*	Nintendo	●○○
LEGO *Star Wars* : The Original Trilogy	LucasArts	●○○
Lizzie McGuire & That's So Raven*	Disney	●●○
LostMagic	Ubisoft	●●○
Mage Knight: Destiny's Soldier	Namco	●●○
Magnetica	Nintendo	●●○
Mah-Jong*	Koei	●○○
Marvel Trading Card Game	Konami	●○○
MechAssault: Phantom War	Majesco	●●○
Metroid Prime Hunters	Nintendo	●●●
Mini RC Rally	SummitSoft	●●○
Mobile Suit Gundam Seed	Bandai	●○○
Monster House	THQ	●○○
Monster Rancher	Tecmo	●○○
Moonlight Fables*	Majesco	●○○
New Super Mario Bros.	Nintendo	●●○
One Piece	Bandai	●●○
Organizer Plus	SummitSoft	●○○
Over the Hedge	THQ	●●○
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	Disney	●○○
Point Blank	Namco	●●○
Quad Desert Fury 2	Majesco	●○○
Scurge: Hive	Orbital	●●○
Shin Megami Tensei DS*	Atlus	●○○
Slime Morimori Dragon Quest*	Square Enix	●○○
Star Trek: Tactical Assault	Bethesda	●○○
Steel Horizon	Konami	●○○
Stormbreaker	THQ	●○○
Tao's Adventure: Curse of the Demon Seal	Konami	●●●
Tetris DS	Nintendo	●●●
Top Spin 2	2K Sports	●●●
Ultimate Brain Games	Telegames	●○○
Ultimate Card Games	Telegames	●●○
Ultimate Pocket Games	Telegames	●○○
Vandal Hearts*	Konami	●○○
Winx Club	Konami	●○○
World Soccer Winning Eleven*	Konami	●○○
X-Men: The Official Game	Activision	●●○

*TENTATIVE TITLE

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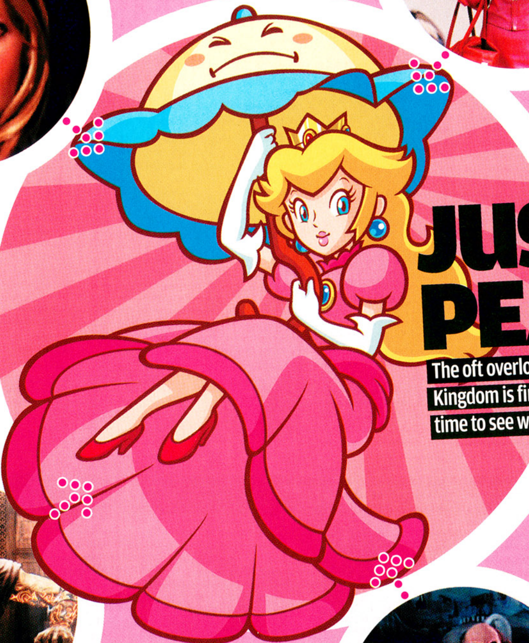
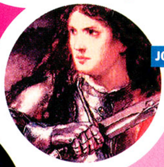
JUST PEACHY!

The oft overlooked Princess of the Mushroom Kingdom is finally getting her own game. It's time to see what this girl is made of.



MARY POPPINS

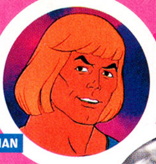


JOAN OF ARC

BUFFY

FAMOUS HEROINES

Who says the main character has to be a fella? History has a long tradition of fearless females.



HE-MAN

ELLE WOODS

MAE WEST

FEISTY BLONDES

They say gentlemen prefer blondes. If that's the case, they must *love* Princess Peach.

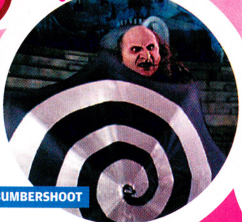
PRINCE OF PERSIA

KING
SLENDER

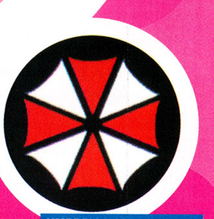
KING SLENDER

GAMING ROYALTY

Just like the real world, the gaming world needs it monarchs, too. Now if she could only find a prince . . .



PENGUIN'S BUMBERSHOOT

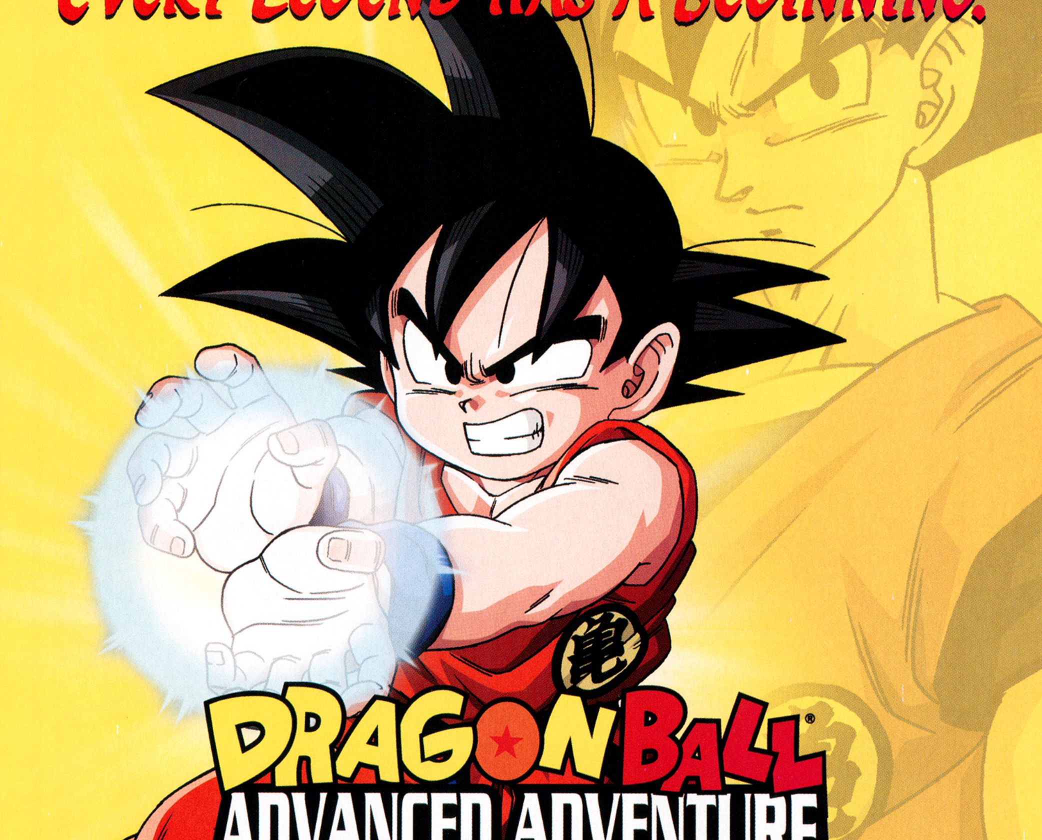


UMBRELLA CORPORATION

DEADLY UMBRELLAS

Be it for rain protection, a fashion accessory, or as a lethal weapon, the umbrella has always been a part of Peach's image.

Every Legend has a Beginning.



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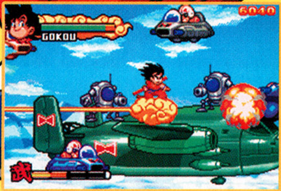
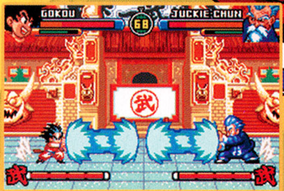
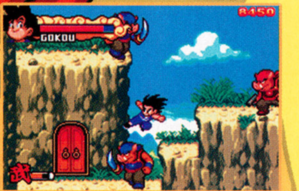
Dragon Ball®- Advanced Adventure takes you back to the time when it all began. Play Goku® as he grows from boy, to full blown warrior, learning the true origins of Dragon Ball along the way! To fulfill your destiny, you'll train with Master Roshi and Master Korin, face the fearless Red Ribbon Army, and put your new skills to the supreme test when you challenge King Piccolo® to the ultimate battle! Get ready – your legend awaits.







EVERYONE 10+
E 10+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Cartoon Violence

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ATARI

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Jedi! Pirates! A famished raccoon! Big-name licenses are making a splash on all systems.

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Big Brain Academy Pg. 21
LEGO *Star Wars* II: The Original Trilogy Pg. 20
Over the Hedge Pg. 22
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest Pg. 24
Super Monkey Ball Adventure Pg. 23

Jedi Mind Bricks

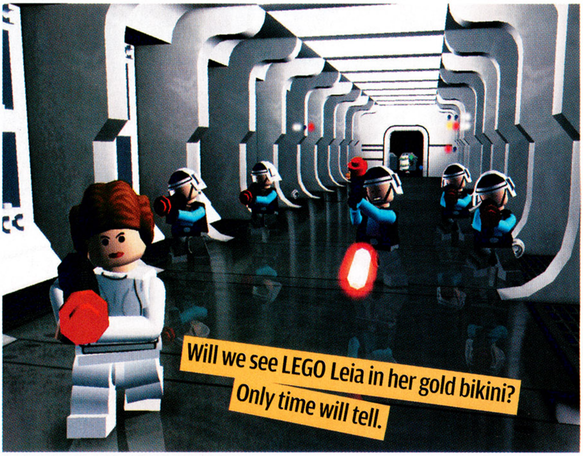
>LEGO *STAR WARS* II: THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

PLATFORM: GCN • PUBLISHER: LucasArts
DEVELOPER: Traveller's Tales • RELEASE: FALL 2006

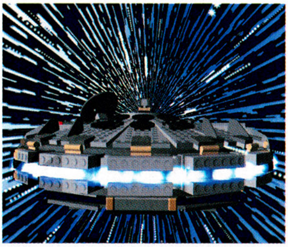
For many *Star Wars* fans, *Episodes I, II,* and *III* were monumentally disappointing. Sure, they had some endearing moments, but none came close to capturing the on-screen magic generated by the films of the original trilogy. Which is why fans will be excited for LEGO *Star Wars* II: The Original Trilogy, which focuses on the story of Luke and the Rebel Alliance from *Episodes IV, V,* and *VI*. Following the wild success of last year's LEGO *Star Wars* (which was based solely on the prequels), LucasArts has taken over publishing duties from Eidos and reenlisted developer Traveller's Tales to retell the original saga—from Luke's life on Tatooine to the destruction of the second Death Star—LEGO *Star Wars*-style!

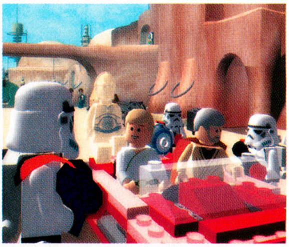
Don't expect a rehash of the first game—LucasArts has big plans for its expansion of the LEGO *Star Wars* universe. An arsenal of new vehicles and creatures, including Luke's landspeeder, X-wings, tauntauns, the *Millennium Falcon*, and speeder bikes, can now be used at will on certain levels. LSWII will also include 50 playable classic *Star Wars* characters, some with attacks and maneuvers specific to them, such as Obi-Wan's Jedi mind trick, Darth Vader's Force choke, and a slap in the face from Princess Leia. In addition, fans of the last game will have the ability to unlock 56 characters from the previous game, using the first game's save data from a GCN Memory Card—that's 106 playable characters in all (that we know of). And if that isn't enough to appease fans, Traveller's Tales has taken the LEGO theme even further by allowing players to mix and match LEGO body parts to create combination characters such as Chew Vader, Stormbacca, and many more.

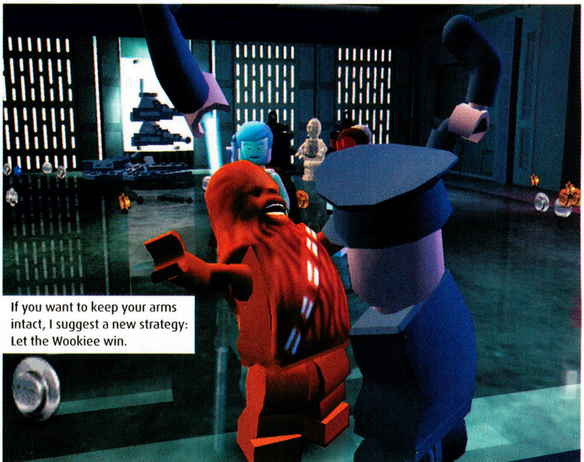
LucasArts promises that we'll see as much content as possible from the original trilogy through the LEGO lens. We'll experience the Battle of Hoth, the Death Star trench run, the Battle of Endor, Luke's epic confrontation with Vader, and many more classic moments—all with the familiar tongue-in-cheek humor of the first game. Whether you're a LEGO *Star Wars* fan or an old-school *Star Wars* snob, you'll recognize that the Force is strong with LSWII. —Andy M.



Will we see LEGO Leia in her gold bikini? Only time will tell.







If you want to keep your arms intact, I suggest a new strategy: Let the Wookiee win.

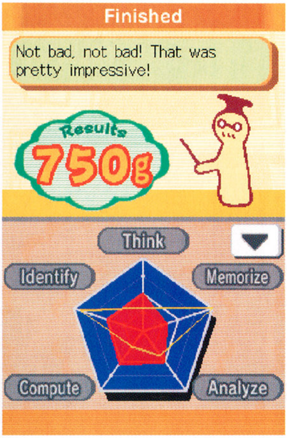
Schooled Big-Time!

>BIG BRAIN ACADEMY

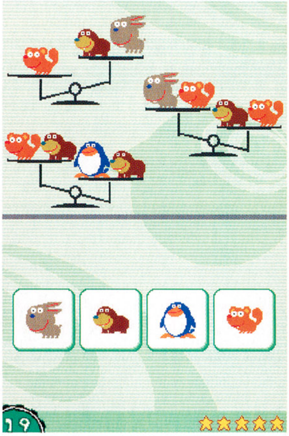
PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
DEVELOPER: NINTENDO • RELEASE: MAY 30, 2006

I'm the freakin' headmaster of Broken Brain Academy, where I teach classes like "What's Your Name Again?" and "How Many Is 10?" So it's no shocker that I got an F+ the first time I was tested at Big Brain Academy. I wasn't crushed, since the second game in Nintendo's training series tests you in a much more whimsical—but no less challenging—way than Brain Age. My F+ was served by BBA's headmaster, Dr. Lobe, a cartoony dude who looks like he's a . . . uh, we're not sure. Is he a twitchy finger puppet? A chunk of overcaffeinated brain matter? At least we know why he opened the academy: to "embiggerate" brains. That is, he wants to bulk up brain weight through exercise in rapid-fire activities that span five mental categories: Think, Memorize, Analyze, Compute, and Identify.

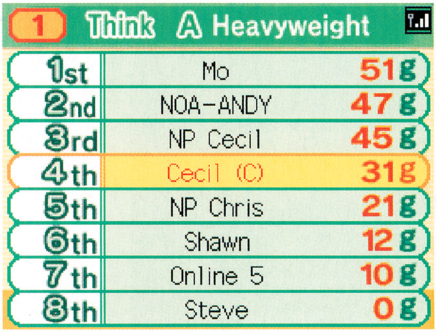
After taking my near-failing test, I was told that my brain weighed 615 grams—scrawny, given that Dr. Lobe claims the average brain is 1,400 grams. But to temper that bad news, Lobe let me know how my brain measures against those in certain careers. Fact is, I failed in most mental categories but superexcelled in visual-identification activities—and Lobe told me that I had an artistic mind akin to Michelangelo's. Nice guy. Of course, Lobe knows how to sweet-talk a student back to class, and that's the idea behind Big Brain Academy. Like Brain Age, BBA is meant to be played only a little each day as you push your mind to become more embiggerated. And I would like to have a much beefier brain. Average at least. —STEVEN G.



Not bad, not bad! That was pretty impressive!



Big Brain Academy is very different from Brain Age. BBA's expert is fantastically nutty, and his mental activities are lighthearted. In the games crazy multiplayer mode up to eight people at a time are tasked with the same rapid-fire challenge—one activity after another—until the biggest brain wins out.



1 Think A Heavyweight

1st	Mo	51g
2nd	NOA-ANDY	47g
3rd	NP Cecil	45g
4th	Cecil (C)	31g
5th	NP Chris	21g
6th	Shawn	12g
7th	Online 5	10g
8th	Steve	0g

One brain's way better than three, once it's boned up at the Big Brain Academy.

Voracious Vermin

>OVER THE HEDGE

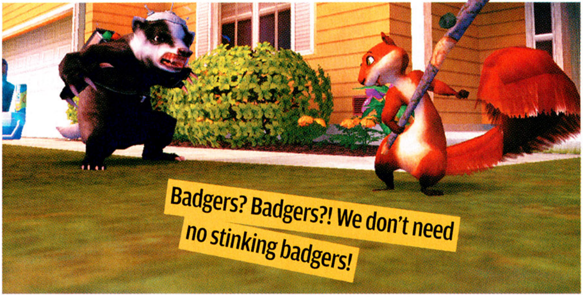
PLATFORMS: GCN, DS, GBA • PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER: EDGE OF REALITY (GCN), VICARIOUS VISIONS (DS, GBA) • RELEASE: MAY 2006

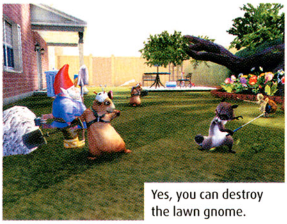
Want to know what's hiding just over the hedge? Animals. A whole bunch of them. RJ the raccoon, Verne the turtle, Hammy the squirrel, Stella the skunk, Ozzie the opossum, and more. They're teaming up to battle (and take advantage of) the effects of encroaching suburbia in this May's *Over the Hedge* CG film from DreamWorks. And, to go along with it, they're appearing in three completely different adventures on DS, GBA, and Nintendo GameCube.

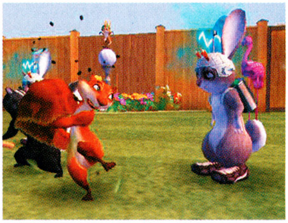
The GCN version of Over the Hedge is all about the thrill of the heist. Working in pairs—players can switch between characters on the fly in single-player mode or have a friend join in for co-op play—it's up to RJ, Verne, Hammy, and Stella to infiltrate the neighborhood's yards, houses, and surrounding areas (including caves and a theme park) to stock up on food. But these thieves are far from subtle. Each character has melee attacks, ranged attacks, energy-meter-draining special moves, and double-team attacks, and they're ready to unleash them against unscrupulous pest-control company Vermtech's army of mind-controlled gophers, rats, badgers, and other vermin. Minigames (such as catching various types of food as they fall from a second-story window) within the title's 30 stages add variety, as do three types of unlockable bonus games: a golf-cart destruction derby, an RC-car racing game, and a search-and-destroy take on golf.

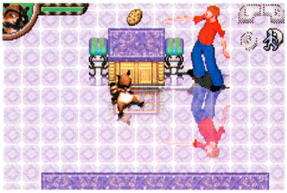
At the other end of the OTH spectrum sits the DS version, which emphasizes strategy, adventure, and teamwork over action. In a story set after the movie's, Verne, RJ, and Hammy need to collect various items to put a stop to further suburban sprawl. Since the characters have no weapons on the DS, they'll have to rely on their innate skills—each has different levels of strength, jumping power, and climbing ability—and items like cell phones (for distracting humans with calls) to survive. The game also takes advantage of the DS's features: Real-time 3-D on each screen provides both an over-the-shoulder view and an overhead view of the action, and you can speak into the microphone to revive fallen characters or distract enemies.

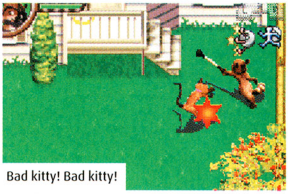
Meanwhile, top-down action is the order of the day on the GBA. Whether you're solving block puzzles in a forest maze, avoiding traffic on sidewalk stages, fighting enemy critters in yards, or sneaking past humans in their own houses, four distinct stage types attempt to keep things fresh, and minimissions based on events from the flick—like when Hammy pretends he's rabid in order to snag a load of cookies—promise to up the authenticity factor. Who knew that one hedge could hold so much gameplay? —CHRIS H.

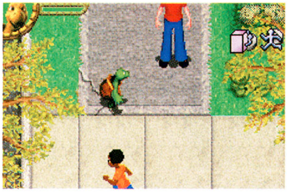

Badgers? Badgers?! We don't need no stinking badgers!

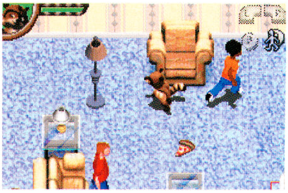

Yes, you can destroy the lawn gnome.






Bad kitty! Bad kitty!





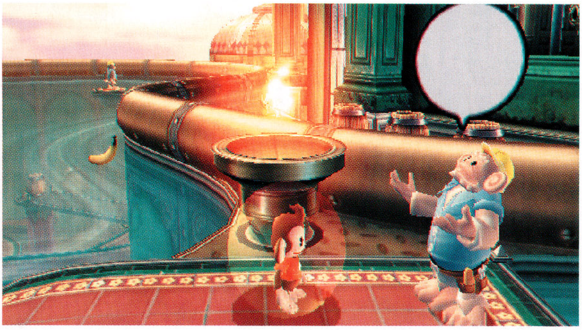
I know. We Need Pants!

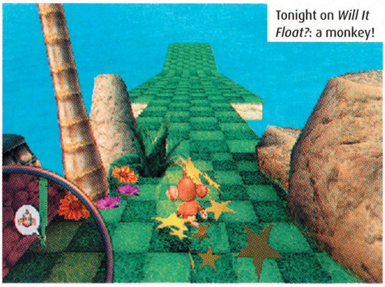
Monkey Love

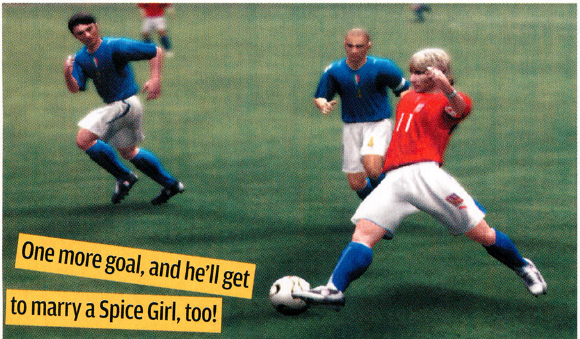
>SUPER MONKEY BALL ADVENTURE

PLATFORM: GCN • PUBLISHER: SEGA
DEVELOPER: TRAVELLER'S TALES • RELEASE: JUNE 2006

Princess Deedee and Prince Abeabe are madly in love, but a feud between their respective kingdoms forbids their relationship. It's a modern-day retelling of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Of course, that story ended in tragedy because there was no monkey in a ball to reconcile things between the two sides. Not so in Super Monkey Ball Adventure. Everyone's favorite bare-bottomed primate, Aiai, helps the star-crossed lovers make good in his first-ever platformer. Developed by Traveller's Tales (LEGO *Star Wars*, Sonic 3D Blast), the quest-driven adventure will take Aiai from the underwater city of Kongri-la to the theme-park world of Zootopia. A new chant system grants his ball special abilities such as gliding and boxing, which should lend the gameplay some extra variety. For Monkey Ball purists, SMBA will also offer 50 new puzzle boards and a selection of classic four-player party games. —STEVE T.




Tonight on *Will It Float?*: a monkey!


One more goal, and he'll get to marry a Spice Girl, too!

For most of us, this is as close as we're gonna get.

Take On the World

>2006 FIFA WORLD CUP

PLATFORM: GCN • PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER: EA CANADA • RELEASE: APRIL 2006

While America is in post-Super Bowl withdrawal and counting the days until basketball postseason begins, the rest of the sports world is whipping itself into a full-blown soccer frenzy in anticipation of soccer's World Cup. This year, Germany will host the every-four-year event, by far the largest single-sport tournament in the world. To give Americans an idea of how awesome the spectacle is, EA is releasing 2006 FIFA World Cup.

The main mode allows you to play as any of 127 national teams, beginning with qualifying tournaments and finishing with the 32-team main event. The game also boasts 12 official stadiums across Germany. Other modes include a penalty shootout challenge, a re-creation of classic moments in World Cup history, and an extensive multiplayer mode that allows you to customize your own brackets and play against up to eight friends.

2006 FIFA World Cup should hit stores in April, giving you enough time to get your skills up before the big games. —CHRIS S.

A Pirate's Life for Me

>PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST

PLATFORMS: DS, GBA • PUBLISHER: BUENA VISTA GAMES
DEVELOPER: AMAZE ENTERTAINMENT • RELEASE: JUNE 2006

Disney's theme-parks-attraction-turned-hit-film, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, will have the wind in its sails once more this summer, plundering cineplexes and Nintendo handhelds. Dead Man's Chest for the DS and GBA both follow the story of the second film in the planned *Pirates* trilogy, but they use different methods to do so. Whereas the DS game is a 3-D action adventure, the GBA title is a side-scroller that incorporates RPG elements and sailing sections.

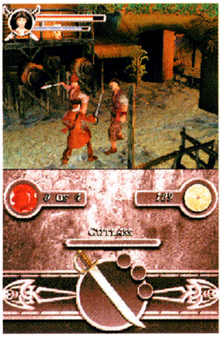
The GBA adventure's Captain Jack Sparrow leads the crew of the *Black Pearl* in an expedition that encompasses 15 islands (both film-story locations and new destinations). Sea battles are displayed via an overhead view with ships circling each other and firing their cannons. You can sink a ship with cannonfire, or ram it then board it and search the decks for treasure. Ship interiors and tropical locales make up more than 50 2-D fighter-platformer stages. Jack pulls off swashbuckling moves with ease, including sword combos and a special technique that has him tossing a bottle into the air, shooting it, and hitting all of the enemies in the area with glass shards. Jack buys and sells items (which keep the crew happy so they won't mutiny) and acquires information in town. Rumors lead Jack to new destinations and move him closer to the story's conclusion. Along the way, boss battles involve clashes with characters from the film.

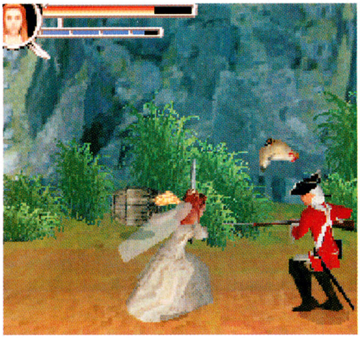
The DS game is a three-character, 19-level 3-D fighter that offers co-op wireless play for two participants. Jack is joined by Will Turner and Elizabeth Swann, all three of whom bear a striking resemblance to the film's actors (Johnny Depp, Orlando Bloom, and Keira Knightly, respectively). Voice samples, however, are not provided by the movie actors, but by the actors who did the voice work for the Kingdom Hearts II pirate level.

The fighters have signature moves and can earn up to nine combos, such as the Clap of Thunder and Cannonball Kick. Additionally, the game's 17 weapons include swords, pistols, and throwing knives. Every level ends with a battle versus a boss character, such as an executioner who haunts the game's opening prison level.

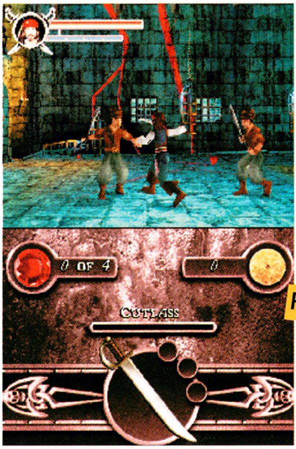
The lower screen is used to display weapon and item status, and to control the three minigames: Walk the Plank (a Simon-like memory game), Shoot the Monkey (target practice), and Boom Barge (a sea battle involving crates and barrels).

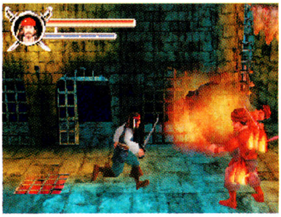
The games' late-June launch date will beat the movie's July 7th release by a couple of weeks, giving players a sneak peek at movie-plot secrets.
—GEORGE S.



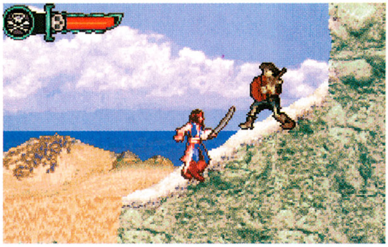


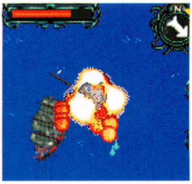
Given her expertise in handling a blade, Elizabeth won't have any trouble cutting her wedding cake.



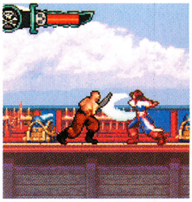


First Willy Wonka. Now Jack Sparrow. Could Edward Scissorhands: The Video Game be far behind?





You sank my pirate ship! The GBA version of Dead Man's Chest features action on the high seas.



LET THE ULTIMATE BATTLE BEGIN!
Ready to get schooled? Control your chakra and unleash powerful jutsu in knock-down-drag-out brawls. Believe it!
The Nine-Tailed Fox Chakra
3:54
Sasuke
Multiple Shurikens
4:54
MULTIPLE SHURIKENS!
Kakashi
4:20
Naruto
Sasuke
Combo hits
Kakashi
Zabuza
GAME BOY ADVANCE
NARUTO NINJA COUNCIL
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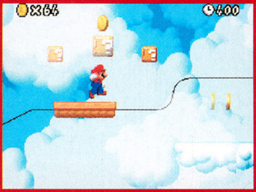
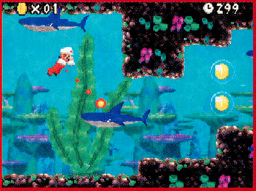
The Bros. Are Back

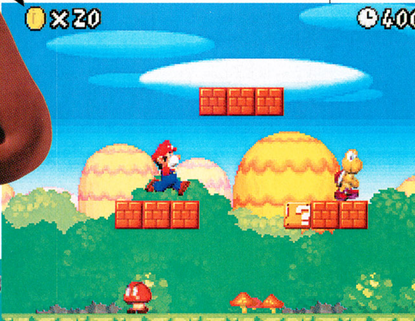
More than a decade after his last original side-scroller, Mario makes his triumphant 2-D platforming return in New Super Mario Bros. on DS. It's a whole new game.

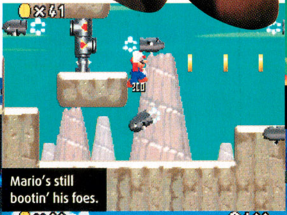
By Chris Hoffman



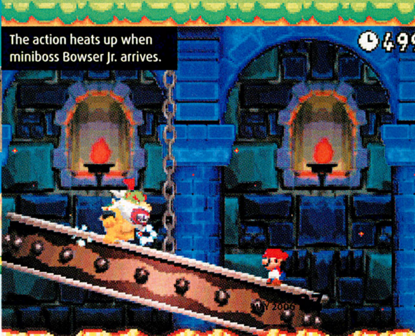


There's always something new and fascinating to discover. Insignificant-looking pipes lead to hidden rooms full of treasure. A well-placed jump reveals invisible blocks floating in midair—some of them even contain precious green mushrooms that grant extra lives. A secret vine presents a coin-filled shortcut through the clouds. And how on Earth do you jump over that darned flagpole? More than 20 years ago, these aspects of the original Super Mario Bros. mesmerized players for the first time, and the landscape of video gaming changed irrevocably. Now, with New Super Mario Bros. headed to the Nintendo DS, players will get to experience those beloved elements and so much more in a completely new Mario platforming adventure.

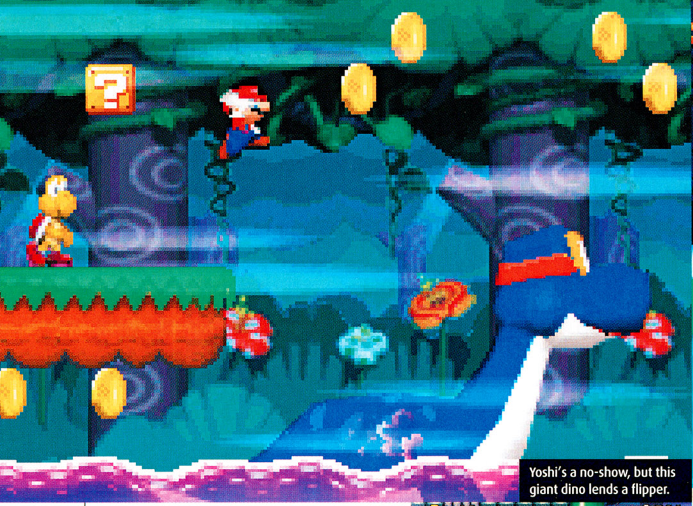




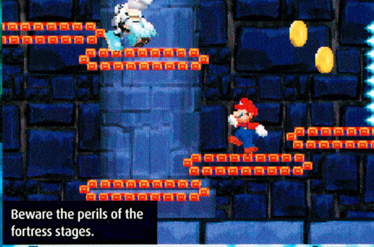
Mario's still bootin' his foes.



The action heats up when miniboss Bowser Jr. arrives.

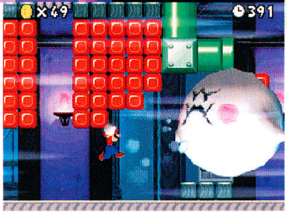


Yoshi's a no-show, but this giant dino lends a flipper.



Beware the perils of the fortress stages.

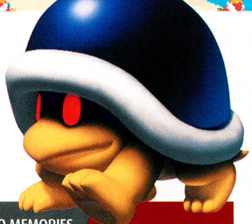
In with the New



As the game's name states, New Super Mario Bros. is a thoroughly original title. While the whimsical gameplay and mechanics are rooted in the older Mario games—jumping on enemies, shattering blocks, powering up with mushrooms, and running across precarious platforms while trying to rescue Princess Peach from the vile clutches of Bowser are all here—the bulk of the game is completely fresh: new levels, new power-ups, new moves, new enemies, you name it.

Amazing new powers provide some of the most obvious additions to the Mario formula. Alongside the usual Super Mushroom (which makes Mario grow from regular Mario to Super Mario) and the Fire Flower (which transforms him into fireball-tossin' Fire Mario), a bulbous megasized mushroom can turn Mario into a giant of screen-filling proportions, while a petite blue mushroom can shrink him down to miniscule size—perfect for getting into tiny passages or bouncing sky-high off of enemies. And even though Mario's staying grounded in this adventure—no powers of flight this time out—he can acquire a blue Koopa shell that lets him turn into a human demolition machine; he'll tuck himself into the shell and run wild, bouncing off walls, busting bricks, and plowing over any enemy that's in his way.

Mario's got some snazzy new moves to show off, as well. Taking a cue from his 3-D adventures, he can perform a butt-bruising ground pound (by pressing down in midjump) and a high-flying triple jump (by hopping three times in sequence while running); some stages even let him swing from ropes or sidle along dangerous ledges. But Mario's most dynamic new 2-D mechanic is the ability to bounce off of walls, which first joined his repertoire in Super Mario Sunshine. The simple but fun addition of wall-kicking (press the jump button while sliding down a wall) opens up amazing exploration possibilities for the world's most famous plumber (and can be a life-saver near bottomless pits). Mario's also got his old-school techniques, like sliding down slopes, running and ducking to get through small gaps, and carrying Koopa shells for later use. Before his adventure is over, Mario will need to make use of them all.



MARIO MEMORIES

Atsushi Inaba

Capcom/Clover Studio
Known for: Viewtiful Joe

"For kids at the time, myself included, [the original Super Mario Bros.] was something special that everyone had in common and could be passionate about. Thanks to this game, even people who had never tried games in their lives could dive into the other world of action games without a steep learning curve. Nowadays, games are almost split between the mainstream and hard-core gamers, but this game had a special power that appealed to gamers across the board."

GREAT MOMENTS IN MARIO

MARIO'S LEGACY IN PLATFORMERS AND BEYOND

1981

Donkey Kong (arcade)
Who would have guessed that Mario, known only as Jumpman in his debut game, would go on to become gaming's biggest star?

1983

Mario Bros. (arcade)
Mario Bros. introduced Luigi and revealed the bros' occupations as plumbers.

October 1985

Super Mario Bros. (NES)
Gaming probably wouldn't be what it is today without Super Mario Bros.

June 1986

Super Mario Bros. 2 (Famicom Disc System, Japan only)
Featuring warp zones that took you backward and poisoned mushrooms that shrank you, the original SMB2 was deemed too difficult for the US.

Anatomy of New Super Mario Bros.

Great level design, tricky enemies, potent power-ups, awesome acrobatic maneuvers—all these and more combine together to create each fantastic Super Mario experience. Here are some of the fabulous features you'll encounter in New SMB.

Block-Bashin'

Once again, Mario's block-busting skills play a huge part in his quest. Blocks often contain coins or power-ups, and if Mario hits a block with an enemy on top of it, he'll KO the foe.

Goomba

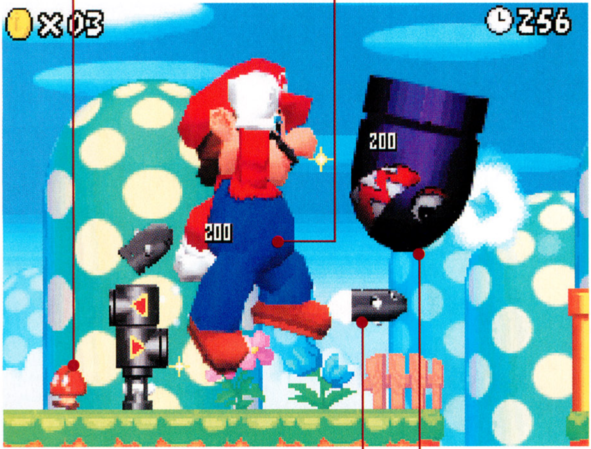
The mushroom-shaped foes called Goombas are Bowser's lowliest flunkies, and have been a thorn in Mario's side since he first set foot in the Mushroom Kingdom. One stomp will render them flat.

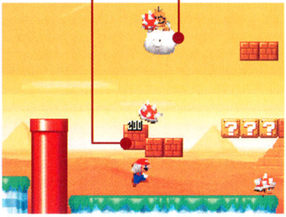
Giant Mario

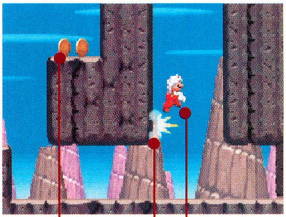
When Mario consumes a massive mushroom, he'll grow to enormous proportions. He's virtually unstoppable—able to smash through blocks, enemies, and pipes alike.

Lakitu

Lakitu's Spiny-hurling ways are very annoying, but if Mario can blast him, our hero can take his cloud for a spin.







Bullet Bill & Banzai Bill

The living projectiles called Bullet Bills can really wreck Mario's day, especially now that their launchers can swivel. The huge Banzai Bills are back too, but even they're no match for Mario's supersized form.

Coins

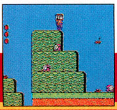
As usual, grabbing 100 glittering coins earns Mario an extra life. They can be found in blocks or hovering in the air.

Fire Mario

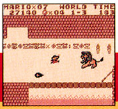
Mario's red overalls signify that he's got the power of fire. Fireballs are a great way to make short work of enemies, and they're especially useful underwater, where Mario's jumps don't work.

Wall Kick

When Mario jumps against a wall or block, then jumps again, he'll kick off the object to reach even greater heights. Wall-kicking is great for reaching out-of-the-way places and getting out of deadly situations.



Nintendo
CEREAL SYSTEM
ZELDA
WE RESCUED BREAKFAST!
THIS TASTES SUPER!



SUPER MARIO BROS. 3

October 1988

Super Mario Bros. 2 (NES)
The game known as Doki Doki Panic in Japan was rebuilt with Mario characters for its US release, and Super Mario Bros. 2 was born.

Late 1988

Nintendo Cereal System
"Super Mario jumps!" sang the TV commercial. The Legend of Zelda was the other flavor released for the so-called Cereal System.

August 1989

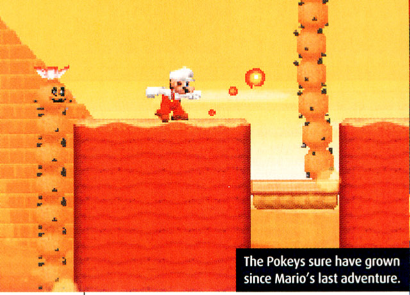
Super Mario Land (GB)
The launch of the Game Boy wouldn't have been complete without Mario.

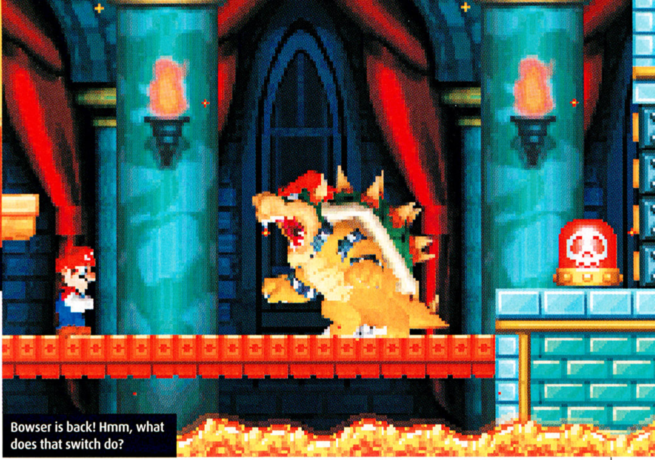
September 1989

Super Mario Bros. Super Show
Whoever decided to cast wrestling manager Capt. Lou Albano as Mario in this syndicated show is awesome.

Early 1990

Comic Books
Valiant's Nintendo Comics System kicked off with "Super Mario Bros. Special Edition #1."


The Pokeys sure have grown since Mario's last adventure.


Bowser is back! Hmm, what does that switch do?

Brave New World

Setting foot into the New Super Mario Bros. version of the Mushroom Kingdom is like getting reacquainted with an old friend. Its lush green plains, inviting pipes, hovering question-mark blocks, and Goombas and Koopas on patrol are instantly familiar. Unlike at some reunions, though, you'll discover that New SMB isn't just older—it's smarter, more refined, better looking. The mix of polygonal characters merged with colorful, vibrant, parallax-filled 2-D backgrounds is visually striking, and details like flowers in the foreground and dome-shaped hills in the background bring the world to life. At the end of each stage, there's even a staircaselike arrangement of blocks that leads to a level-clearing flagpole; just like in the original SMB, extra points and, yes, fireworks, reward a well-timed jump. But even if you've never played a Mario game before, you'll have no trouble diving in, thanks to Mario's hallmark intuitive gameplay.

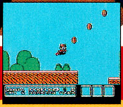
Subsequent stages—excursions into blue-hued caves, treks beneath the sea, jaunts across clusters of giant mushrooms, and, of course, expeditions into stony, lava-filled fortresses—deliver similar nostalgia, but always with extra twists. Underground seesaw-esque slabs tilt back and forth, providing new routes for skilled play-

MARIO MEMORIES

Koji Igarashi

Konami
Known for: Castlevania

"Everything I'm looking for is all packed into Super Mario Bros. Game control, game speed, fantastic characters, etc. Everything is perfect. As a game developer, I'm very much overwhelmed by the game structure and the inclusion of simple controls. Super Mario Bros. is truly a masterpiece that I always want to target and overcome as a game developer."



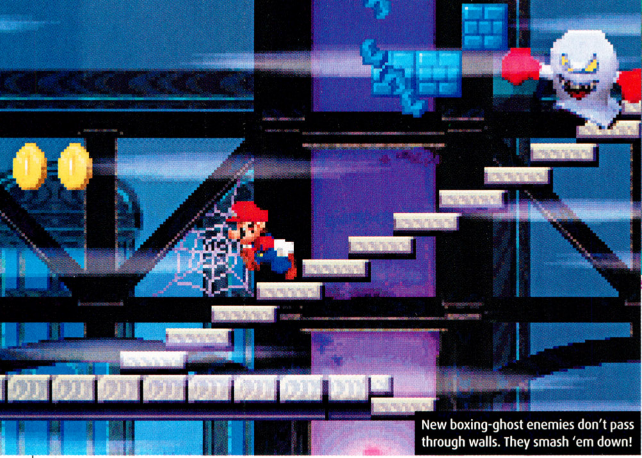
February 1990
Super Mario Bros. 3 (NES)
With nearly 18 million copies sold, Super Mario Bros. 3 is the best-selling stand-alone game ever released.

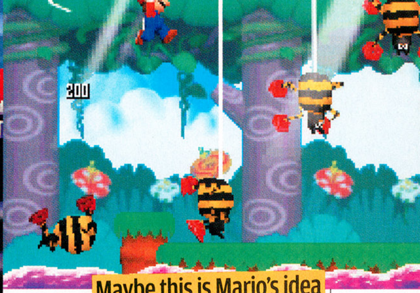
August 1991
Super Mario World (SNES)
Super Mario World ushered in the SNES era with a huge, interconnected world that featured nearly 100 stages.

SUPER MARIO WORLD
SUPER NINTENDO

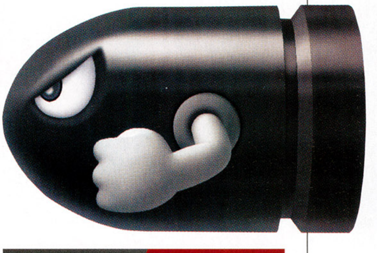
November 1992
Super Mario Land 2: 6 Golden Coins (GB)
Perhaps this game's biggest contribution was the introduction of Wario!

May 1993
***Super Mario Bros.* (the motion picture)**
Yes, it happened. Let us speak no more of it.


New boxing-ghost enemies don't pass through walls. They smash 'em down!



Maybe this is Mario's idea of surfing the web.



ers; swarms of plumber-eating sharks and enormous eels lurk within watery depths; features such as tightropes and rotating platforms join usual castle obstacles like fireballs; giant mushroom platforms now come in multiple varieties, such as orange 'shrooms that sway to and fro, rubbery purple 'shrooms that bend under Mario's weight, and springy pink 'shrooms that launch Mario skyward. What about classic elements like 10-Coin Blocks and the invincibility-granting Starman? All present and accounted for.

Eight themed worlds await you—plains, desert, tropical island, forest, ice, mountains, sky, and Bowser's lair—with new challenges at every turn. In World 2, you'll turn the sandy ground into mountainous dunes with the press of a switch; in World 4, you'll cross a deadly swamp by riding on the back of a dinosaur; and you'll battle across icy slopes as snow falls from trees and threatens to send Mario sprawling in World 5. Other challenges include racing through a vertically oriented cave as lava nips at your heels, surviving a foreboding wasteland where you're bombarded by block-smashing volcanic rocks that shoot from the background to the foreground, and navigating a maze (or two) of Piranha Plant-filled pipes. And just wait until you get to the stage that's set atop a 50-foot-long Wiggler.

Even the world maps—which follow the standard set by Super Mario Bros. 3—are a joy to explore. Optional routes through levels reveal multiple paths through the worlds, and by spending hard-earned star coins—three are hidden in each stage—you can access extra areas, like mushroom houses in which Toad provides extra lives or power-ups. If you search hard enough, you might even find a legendary warp zone, but watch out for Hammer Bros.—they patrol the world maps, hoping to get the jump on any hapless hero that crosses their path. In addition, worlds play host to spooky ghost houses (filled with Boos, naturally) and trap-laden forts located at the middle and end of each realm.

Of course, New Super Mario Bros.' 80 or so levels wouldn't be terribly exciting without enemies to fight—fortunately, Mario seems to have the entire Mushroom Kingdom populace against him. Maybe Bowser found a sale on minions? From Bloopers to Buzzy Beetles, Cheep-Cheeps to Koopa Paratroopas, Bullet Bills to Bob-ombs, Lakitus to Whomps, almost every traditional Mario villain is back to exact revenge in New SMB, and they're joined by numerous new foes. Spiders that drop from their webs, boxing-gloved ghouls that have the ability to bust down walls, snowball-hurling bullies, dive-bombing ravens, explosive pumpkins that get meaner when jumped on, and snail-like enemies that are invincible to Mario's attacks—among others—have all joined the Koopa king's motley crew.

A multitude of bosses stand in Mario's way, as well. Bowser's enlisted Bowser Jr. to help him in his latest scheme, and the kid Koopa acts as a miniboss in each world—jumping, spinning, and hurling shells at Mario, sometimes over pits of deadly spikes. Even bigger baddies await at each world's end, including a giant Goomba, a zombified sandworm, an enormous flying Piranha Plant, and more.

MARIO MEMORIES

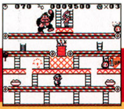
Mike Mika

Backbone Entertainment
Known for: Death, Jr.

"By chance, a friend of mine told me about a game . . . called Super Mario Bros., and that it was the biggest game ever made. . . . Over the weeks we heard of stories, legends of secret warp zones, ways to get nearly infinite lives, and the mysterious negative worlds—we explored every last one of them. It was the most engrossing game I had ever played, and it was arcade-perfect! In fact, it was better than the arcade version. Even when most new secrets turned out to be false, there was always, in the back of our minds, a chance that there was something else undiscovered—hidden, locked away in the cartridge, waiting for us to find it."

August 1993

Super Mario All-Stars (SNES) North American gamers finally got to experience the Japanese SMB2 in this compilation, where it was called Super Mario Bros.: The Lost Levels.



June 1994

Donkey Kong (GB) This sequel to the original Donkey Kong let Mario return to his simian-battling roots.

October 1995

Yoshi's Island: Super Mario World 2 (SNES) Baby Mario made his debut in this excellent prequel. Despite his ceaseless crying, the game was great.

September 1996

Super Mario 64 (N64) More than 10 years after defining 2-D platformers, Mario defined the 3-D platformer.

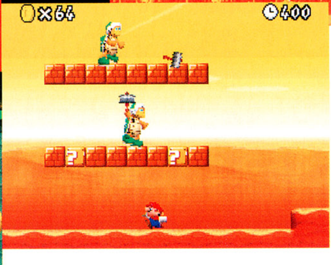
May 1999

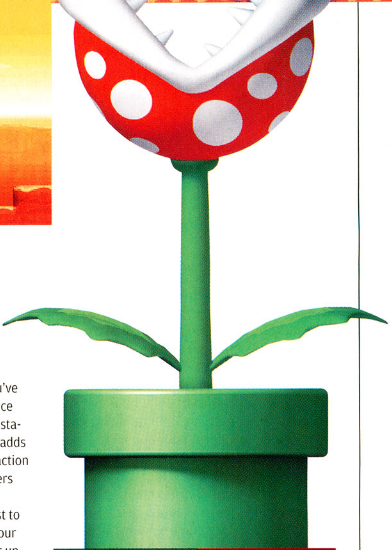
Super Mario Bros. Deluxe (GBC) Thanks to the Game Boy Color, players could now experience the fun of SMB anywhere.

June 2001

Super Mario Advance (GBA) This GBA launch title featured an enhanced version of Super Mario Bros. 2, as well as Mario Bros. for multiplayer fun.

Shades of Super Mario World.





Yep, I think I found what's clogging your sewer.

Battlin' Bros.

Even after you've bashed Bowser, rescued Peach, collected every star coin, and conquered all eight of New SMB's worlds, there's still much more to do. Two players—one as Mario, the other as Luigi—can compete head-to-head over wireless LAN to determine who's the better bro; maybe Luigi will finally get some payback for all the years of standing in his brother's shadow. Specially designed looping levels set in varied environments—including plains, caves, castles, ice, and pipe mazes—let the boys run back and forth in a race to collect the most stars. Snatching them out of the air is the easiest way to get the shiny treasures, but anything goes here: you can stomp your bro, stun him with a fireball, plow him over while tucked into a blue Koopa shell, or use other offensive techniques to attempt to knock a star out of his hands. You have more than just your bro to worry about, too; enemies are afoot, and running into a Goomba, Koopa, Bullet Bill, or other foe will also knock a star from your grasp. Fortunately, the bros can find their traditional power-ups hidden in blocks or as rewards for collecting coins; a Starman that appears after you've nabbed a few extra coins might be the difference between victory and having to listen to that pasta-loving spotlight-hogger gloat once again. It all adds up to some of the craziest multiplayer versus action this side of Super Smash Bros., and it even offers single-card play.

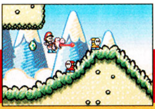
In addition, New Super Mario Bros. plays host to tons of touch-screen minigames, available in four categories—action, puzzle, card, or variety—for up to four players. New minigames like Danger, Bob-omb! Danger! (move a Bob-omb to avoid fireballs); Whack-a-Monty (smack Monty Moles as they emerge from the ground); and Balloon Racing (blow into the microphone to rush to the finish line) join favorites from Super Mario 64 DS, including Wanted!, Picture Poker, Hide and Boo Seek, and many others—and all the returning games have been renovated for versus play. With single-card support and five types of versus modes, including one designed specifically for one-on-one challenges (featuring games like Bob-omb Trampoline, where you bounce a Bob-omb back and forth, and Jumping Sudden Death, where you must tap your bro to keep him from falling on spikes), you could spend hours on New SMB's minigames alone.

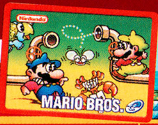
MARIO MEMORIES

Karthik Bala

Vicarious Visions
Known for: Tony Hawk's American Sk8land

"Super Mario Bros. was one of those rare gems that was a *perfect* game. It was so well-tuned and -designed. It was also so very innovative at the time and set a lot of standards. The game is now a seminal reference for 2-D gameplay design for game designers—especially at VV."





February 2002
Super Mario World: Super Mario Advance 2 (GBA)
Because you can never have too many portable versions of Mario.

June 2002
Apparel Appeal
Led by NES-era Mario and friends, retro gaming T-shirts became the in thing.

August 2002
Super Mario Sunshine (GCN)
Isle Delfino isn't just tropical paradise—it's also platforming bliss.

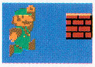
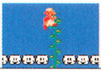
September 2002
Yoshi's Island: Super Mario Advance 3 (GBA)
If you missed it the first time around, pick up the soon-to-be-released Player's Choice version.

November 2002
Mario Bros.-e, Donkey Kong-e (e-Reader cards)
Classic games that can be played from cards? What will they think of next?

October 2003
Super Mario Advance 4: Super Mario Bros. 3 (GBA)
Special e-Reader cards added new features to this port of the beloved megahit.

Then and Now

The original Super Mario Bros. is unquestionably one of the greatest games ever created, but how does it stack up compared to its brand-new, technologically advanced sequel? We dare to compare.

	Old Super Mario Bros.	VS.	New Super Mario Bros.	Verdict
Mario's Mustache	Well-groomed, but a bit blocky		Still well-groomed, less blocky	Winner: New SMB
Mario's Shoe Size	Around 10 or so		Ranges from child size 2 to adult 126	Winner: New SMB
Mario's Derriere	It's always well-protected		Could be injured when used as an offensive weapon	Winner: Old SMB
Luigi...	 Is a palette-swap of his bro		Can kick his bro's butt in versus mode	Winner: New SMB
Androgynous Toads...	Tells you that the princess is in another castle		Provides you with extra lives and power-ups	Winner: Draw
Scariest Enemy	King Bowser		A giant, screen-filling eel that could eat Mario whole	Winner: New SMB
Bowser's Primary Offense	Fireballs and hammers		Sending Bowser Jr. to do his dirty work	Winner: Old SMB
Reward for Hitting the Flagpole	Up to 5,000 points plus six fireworks		Up to a 1-up plus more than six fireworks	Winner: New SMB
When Climbing a Vine...	 You can "do the Mario"		You can't "do the Mario"	Winner: Old SMB

And the Winner is. . . . The original SMB changed the way video games were made with its intuitive control, amazing gameplay, and wonderful worlds, but in many ways, New Super Mario Bros. is even better. Experience it yourself when it hits stores later this spring.

MARIO MEMORIES

Shinji Mikami

Capcom/Clover Studio
Known for: Resident Evil

"[Super Mario Bros.] was one of the games that really made me think of how extremely important the feeling you get when playing a game is to creating action games. The balance and interplay between tension and downtime, that tempo, was great. The music and sound effects were also appealing and unique—just great, like none I had heard until then."

New and Improved

Since his debut nearly 25 years ago, Mario has been many things—plumber, carpenter, kart driver, painter, gorilla wrangler, referee, party animal, multisport superstar, dancer, doctor—but none as significant as platform-game icon. With his long-awaited return to 2-D greatness, the mustachioed mascot proves he's still the leader in the genre that made him a household name, and he does it with a game that stays true to the sense of wonder that made the original such a hit. With a vast, brand-new single-player game, two-player versus competition, and four-player minigames, New Super Mario Bros. may be Mario's most robust adventure yet; this article only scratches the surface of what's in store for the bros. And just like the original SMB, the game promises to keep players exploring for hours on end as they try to uncover just one more secret. Even if they still can't jump over the flagpole.

DK
CLASSIC NES SERIES
GAME BOY ADVANCE
SUPER MARIO BROS.

May 2004

Mario vs. Donkey Kong (GBA)
This cerebral platformer proves one thing: Mario enjoys watching big gorillas fall on their heads.

June 2004

Classic NES Series: Super Mario Bros. & Donkey Kong (GBA)
Perfect versions of the NES games—even the Minus World was here.

November 2004

Super Mario 64 DS (DS)
Minigames, new levels, and new playable characters made the DS version a brand-new experience.

February 2005

Mario Goes to College
The social impact of Mario was never more apparent than when life-sized interpretations showed up at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and later at MIT.

2006

New Super Mario Bros.

2008

Mario Elected President
World peace reigns.

Fruit Rings
FRUITY KITTY PEBBLES
HONEY BUZZ
1
2
3
Honey and Nut OatsyDotes

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SQUIRLY PUFFS
They're CRAZY GOOD!
LINDA
PRETTY okay
FRUITY KITTY PEBBLES
Honey & Nut Toasted Oats
HONEY BUZZ
WESTERN FAMILY Corn Flakes
Mallow Yellows
NET WT. 13 OZ. (368g)

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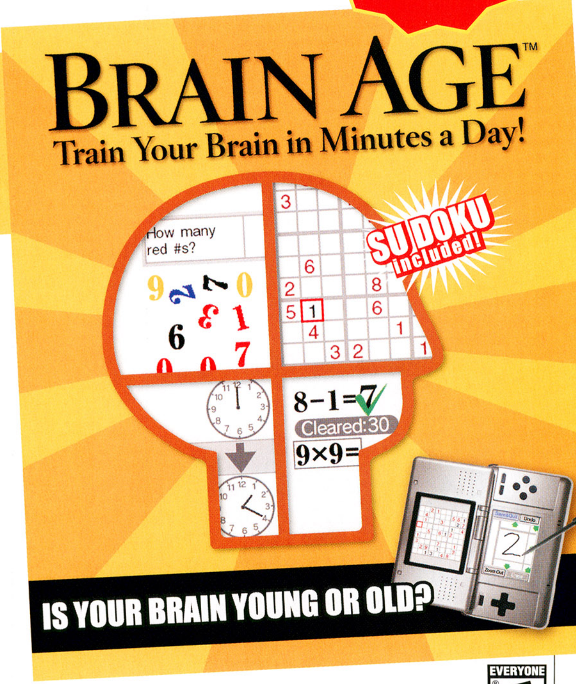
TWO BRAINS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

ENTER TO WIN A $3000 SCHOLARSHIP

Get a nongamer to play the upcoming cranium cruncher Brain Age and win big bucks toward your education!

You're a gamer. You know Link's last name. You view skyscrapers as Tetris blocks. You have a Mega Man shrine in your bedroom. Don't you wish nongamers understood your love for pixels and polygons?

Well, here's your chance to prove how beneficial video games can be. Brain Age for the Nintendo DS is designed with the nongamer in mind: its simple, touch-screen-based format and a nifty progress-tracking system will get those not in the know to understand your obsession.


BRAIN AGE™
Train Your Brain in Minutes a Day!
How many red #s?
SUDOKU included!
8−1=7
Cleared:30
9×9=
IS YOUR BRAIN YOUNG OR OLD?

©2005, 2006 Nintendo © 2006 NIKOLI Co., Ltd.

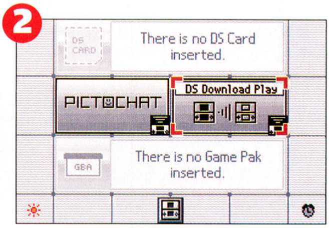
ROAD TRIP!

DS ON THE DOWNLOAD

Downloading the Brain Age demo is so easy your mother could do it, and for your sake, she'd better! Look for Nintendo DS Download Stations in stores near you and try out a selection of upcoming titles. In addition to the Brain Age demo, be sure to sample the smash-hit Mario Kart DS, as well as the updated classic Tetris DS. The demos will remain in your Nintendo DS until you turn the system off.

1
DS
DOWNLOAD STATION
DOWNLOAD FREE DS DEMO TITLES HERE!
Bring your Nintendo DS to download games and movies!
[Within 15 ft. of this location]

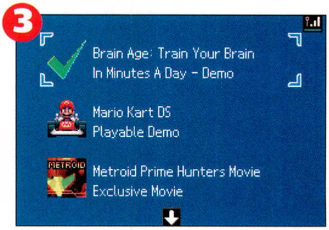
To find a participating retail outlet near you, head to **www.nintendo.com/dsdownloadstation**. Then, grab your Nintendo DS and head to the store. Once you're at the store, look for the sign above, as well as a floor mat indicating you've found the right place.



There is no DS Card inserted.

There is no Game Pak inserted.

Next, remove any games that are in your Nintendo DS and turn on the system. At the main screen, tap the DS Download Play button on the touch screen, then select DS-Download Station to begin loading the demo.


3
Brain Age: Train Your Brain In Minutes A Day - Demo
Mario Kart DS Playable Demo
Metroid Prime Hunters Movie Exclusive Movie

The Brain Age demo is the first game on the list of available demos. Just tap the title on the touch screen to begin the game. Follow the on-screen instructions to experience the variety of different ways to play!

HOW TO ENTER THE CONTEST

• First

Write a short essay (less than 100 words) to explain which friend or family member would benefit from playing Brain Age, and why.

• Next

Take your Nintendo DS and your Brain Age guinea pig to a local game retailer and download the Brain Age demo from the in-store Nintendo DS Download Station.

• Finally

Have your enlightened friend or family member write up a short essay (again less than 100 words) about the experience of playing Brain Age for the first time. Submit both writing pieces to us.

We'll select the most eloquent prose pair based on insight and humor, as well as grammar and spelling. If your essays get the best grade, we'll award you a $3,000 scholarship!

You can send us your essays either by e-mail or physical mail.

Entries are due by 4/30/06.

**NINTENDO POWER
BRAIN AGE CONTEST
P.O. BOX 3580
REDMOND, WA 98073-3580**

contests@nintendopower.com

OFFICIAL CONTEST RULES

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. PURCHASE WILL NOT IMPROVE ODDS OF WINNING. Only legal U.S. or Canadian residents (excluding Puerto Rico and Quebec) who are not employees of Nintendo of America Inc. ("Sponsor") or its affiliates (or their immediate families) are eligible to enter. Void where prohibited.

To enter, please send two essays to the address below. One essay should describe your experience with the Brain Age downloadable demo for the Nintendo DS, and the other should describe the experience of a nongamer friend or family member. Your entry should also include your name, address, and telephone number.

NINTENDO POWER
BRAIN AGE ESSAY CONTEST Vol. 203
P.O. BOX 97062
REDMOND, WA 98073-9762

One entry per household. To be eligible to win a prize, entries must be completed and received by Sponsor by 04/30/06 ("Entry Deadline"). Sponsor is not responsible for: (a) late, lost, illegible, or misdirected mail; (b) disruptions or damages due to events beyond Sponsor's control; or (c) printing or typographical errors. All entries become the property of Sponsor. Entrants consent to being placed on a mailing list for promotional materials. On or about 05/20/06, all entries will be judged by a panel of qualified judges, who will determine which entry is the most insightful, humorous, and grammatically correct. Sponsor will attempt to notify winner by mail by 06/20/06. Prizes not claimed within 14 days after notification or which are undeliverable will be forfeited and will not be awarded to an alternate winner. Unless prohibited by law, winner consents to Sponsor's promotional use of their name, likeness and other personal information without further compensation. No transfer or substitution of prizes permitted, except that Sponsor may substitute a prize of equal or greater value for any prize. For a copy of these rules, or (after 06/20/06) a winners list, send your request to the address above. VT residents may omit return postage. Grand Prize: One (1) Grand Prize winner will receive a Three Thousand Dollar ($3,000) scholarship, which will be awarded in the form of cash. Approximate Retail Value (ARV) of Grand prize package is $3,000. If the Grand Prize is won by a minor, it will be awarded to a parent/legal guardian on their behalf. Winner (and if winner is a minor his or her parent/legal guardian) may be required to execute an affidavit of eligibility and release of liability as a condition of award. Affidavit not returned to Sponsor within 20 days after notice, will result in prize forfeiture. By entering, you (and, if you are a minor, your parents or legal guardians) release Sponsor, its parent, and their affiliates, directors, officers and employees (collectively, "Released Parties") from any liability for any claims, costs, injuries, losses or damages incurred in connection with the Contest or any prize (including those related to personal injury, death, damage to property, and rights of publicity or privacy). IF YOU ARE A MINOR, YOUR PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIANS AGREE TO INDEMNIFY EACH OF THE RELEASED PARTIES FROM ANY SUCH CLAIMS, COSTS, INJURIES, LOSSES OR DAMAGES SUFFERED BY YOU. Entrants agree to be bound by these Rules and Sponsor's decisions, which are final. Sponsor may change these Rules and/or suspend or cancel the Contest at any time if causes beyond Sponsor's control affect the administration of the Contest or Sponsor otherwise becomes (in its sole discretion) incapable of running the Contest as planned. Any provision of these Rules deemed unenforceable will be enforced to the extent permissible, and the remainder of these Rules will remain in effect. The Contest and all accompanying materials are Copyright © 2006 by Nintendo of America Inc.

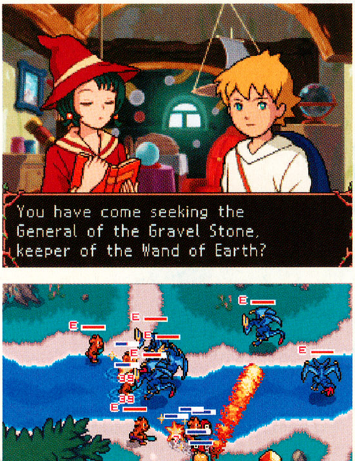
nintendo Wi-Fi connection

THE LOST WORLD

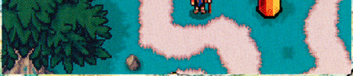
Taito and acclaimed animator Yoshiharu Sato take touch control into a new realm with **LostMagic**, the first great fantasy game for Nintendo DS.

By Andy Myers

You probably haven't heard of LostMagic, and if you have, you likely don't know much about it. The upcoming title (which is being published in North America by Ubisoft) has no relation to any established franchise and no immediately recognizable characters. It's also a difficult game to categorize; it blends elements of fantasy, role playing, and real-time strategy while adding completely new gameplay techniques involving the DS touch screen and Wi-Fi capabilities. LostMagic may not be garnering as much hype as some other games out there, but it has much to offer to both RPG fans and DS owners, especially those looking for something a little different. Join us for a hands-on journey through the English version of the game as we explore the first few chapters and go behind the scenes with the game's producer and art director.



You have come seeking the
General of the Gravel Stone,
keeper of the Wand of Earth?



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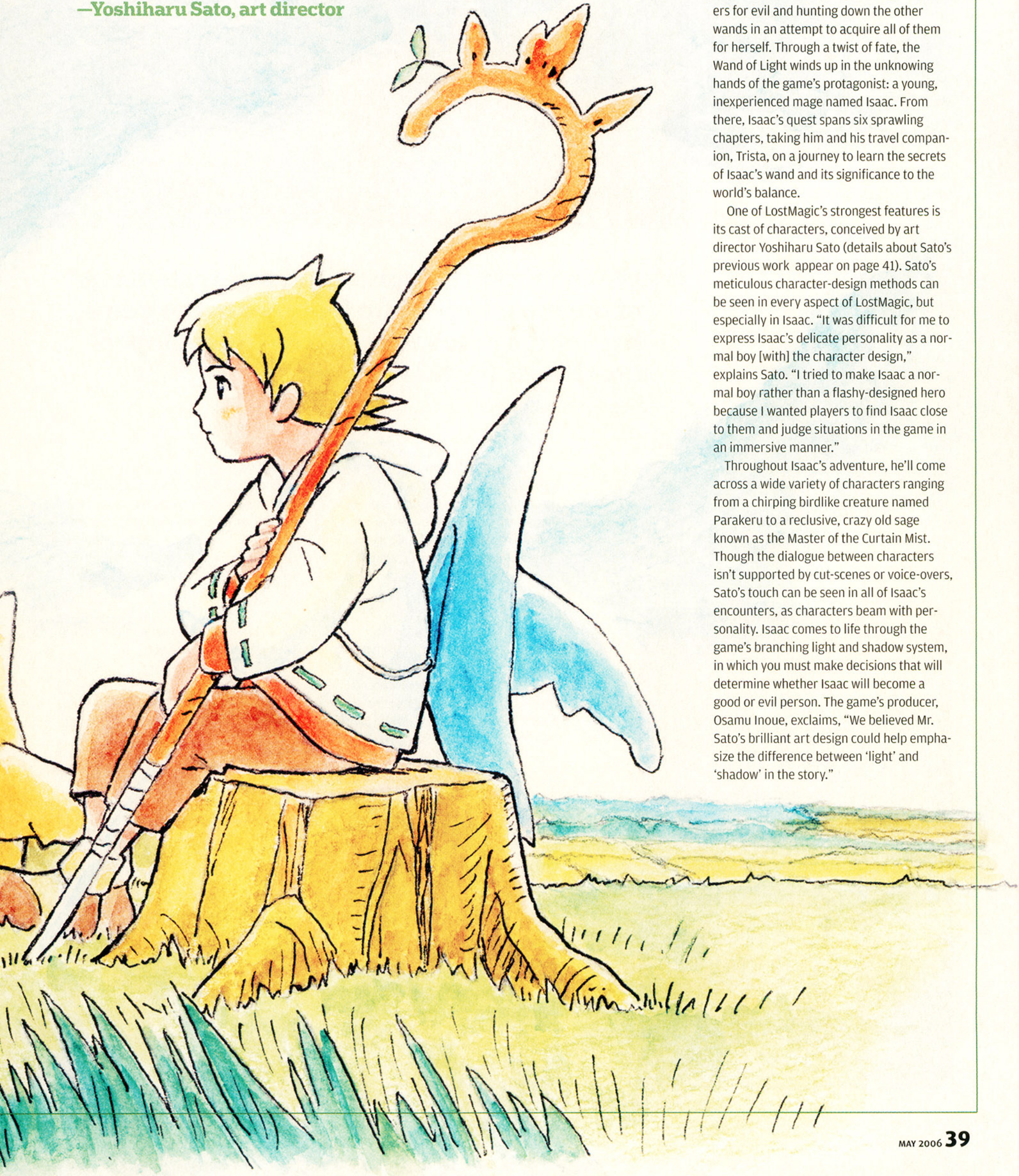
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

> **“I tried to make Isaac a normal boy rather than a flashy-designed hero . . .”**
>
> —Yoshiharu Sato, art director



Land of the Lost

LostMagic takes place in a land ruled by magic, in which seven wands control the fate of the people. The wands have long been under the protection of seven sages—until recently, when Seneka Windell, the most beautiful of the sages and keeper of the Wand of Balance, began using her powers for evil and hunting down the other wands in an attempt to acquire all of them for herself. Through a twist of fate, the Wand of Light winds up in the unknowing hands of the game’s protagonist: a young, inexperienced mage named Isaac. From there, Isaac’s quest spans six sprawling chapters, taking him and his travel companion, Trista, on a journey to learn the secrets of Isaac’s wand and its significance to the world’s balance.

One of LostMagic’s strongest features is its cast of characters, conceived by art director Yoshiharu Sato (details about Sato’s previous work appear on page 41). Sato’s meticulous character-design methods can be seen in every aspect of LostMagic, but especially in Isaac. “It was difficult for me to express Isaac’s delicate personality as a normal boy [with] the character design,” explains Sato. “I tried to make Isaac a normal boy rather than a flashy-designed hero because I wanted players to find Isaac close to them and judge situations in the game in an immersive manner.”

Throughout Isaac’s adventure, he’ll come across a wide variety of characters ranging from a chirping birdlike creature named Parakeru to a reclusive, crazy old sage known as the Master of the Curtain Mist. Though the dialogue between characters isn’t supported by cut-scenes or voice-overs, Sato’s touch can be seen in all of Isaac’s encounters, as characters beam with personality. Isaac comes to life through the game’s branching light and shadow system, in which you must make decisions that will determine whether Isaac will become a good or evil person. The game’s producer, Osamu Inoue, exclaims, “We believed Mr. Sato’s brilliant art design could help emphasize the difference between ‘light’ and ‘shadow’ in the story.”

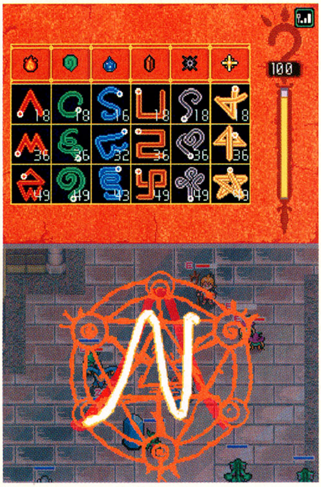
A Flick of the Wrist

A good story is only part of what makes an RPG worthwhile—the quality of the gameplay can make or break the entire experience. LostMagic has a tool in its arsenal that other RPGs do not—a touch screen. The game's battle system is built completely around touch control, from how you move your characters to how you attack. To move allies on the map, you touch characters and destinations with the stylus, much like the point-and-click action of a PC real-time strategy game. In addition, you can touch and drag the stylus like a mouse to select multiple characters at once.

It's the simple concept behind LostMagic's spell-casting, though, that truly separates it from other RPGs. Basically, the DS stylus is your magic wand, and you must move the stylus around in patterns (known in the game as Runes) to cast a spell. "One of our team members used to play tabletop [RPGs] a lot and wanted to create a system where characters can cast spells in an immersive manner," says Inoue. "We thought the DS stylus would be the best device for it."

Unlike in a traditional RPG, everything takes place in real time, so you must choose your spells quickly to succeed. To perform a spell, you must hold down the L or R Button (depending on whether you're left-handed or right-handed) to bring up the Rune circle, and draw one of 18 Rune shapes within it. Some shapes are more complicated than others, and will require practice—the faster and more accurately you draw them, the more powerful the spell will be. "We consider the Rune-drawing system one of the most important features in the game," continues Inoue. "It's not too much to say that we developed LostMagic for this system." There are six Rune types in LostMagic: fire, wind, water, earth, dark, and light. The more spells of a particular type you cast, the more Isaac will level up in that category. If you have an affinity for fire spells, for instance, Isaac will become proficient in fire magic more quickly than the other categories.

> **"We consider the Rune-drawing system one of the most important features in the game. It's not too much to say that we developed LostMagic for this system."**
>
> **—Osamu Inoue, producer**

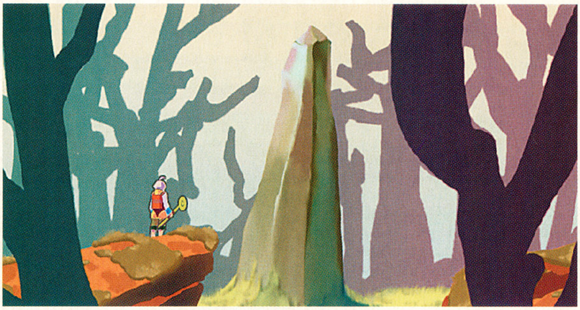


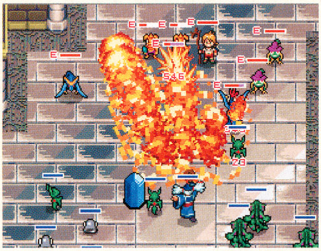
The farther you get in the game, the more complicated the spell-casting system becomes, as you start learning combination spells known as Duo Runes and Trio Runes. Whereas single Rune spells have general effects such as damaging opponents, creating walls to block enemies, and healing party members, combining Runes can create much more-complicated spells that will increase a character's accuracy or cause foes to change sides midbattle.

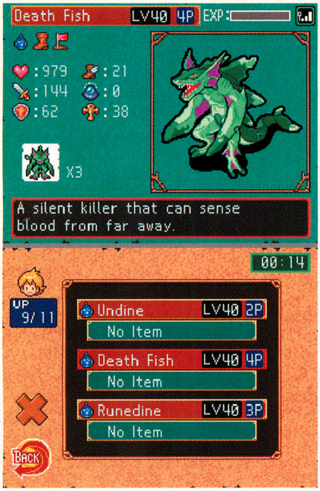
Monster Party

Dark Runes are the most challenging to master, because they have a different purpose than the other Runes—they allow Isaac to capture enemy monsters and tame them. Once a monster is in Isaac's possession, you can start building a party to take with you into battle. Monsters level up individually the more you use them. There are about 60 different monsters in the game, each with very different strengths, weaknesses, and special abilities such as flying or long-range attacking. Just about any monster on the battlefield can be captured, though some are more difficult to acquire than others. Similar to other monster-catching RPGs, you must whittle down a creature's health without dealing a death blow before you'll have a chance at capturing it. When attempting to bag enemies, many aspects come into play, including how experienced Isaac is, how strong the monster is, and how accurately you cast the Dark Rune spell. The more experienced Isaac becomes, the more monsters he can have under his control and the more options you'll have when building your party.

> **“We have to make sure the story and art design match the game system. That is the biggest difference from film projects, I think.”** —Yoshiharu Sato







A silent killer that can sense blood from far away.

Worldwide Magic

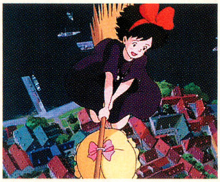
The benefits of learning new spells, gaining experience, and crafting a solid party of monsters go beyond mastering the game's single-player mode. LostMagic also has a robust multiplayer mode in which you can challenge other players' parties through wireless multi-card play or via Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. LostMagic's Wi-Fi capabilities are similar in concept to Mario Kart DS's—you can pair up with a player from your customizable friend list, or search for a random opponent from anywhere in the world. And in case your party is not experienced enough to duel randomly with the riffraff on Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection, you can choose one of the game's many preset parties to take into battle, or seek out rivals at a similar skill level to yours.

Wi-Fi multiplayer, along with the game's unique battle system and art style, makes LostMagic an RPG unlike any other. Though the game revolves around DS features, you'll likely notice that the spell-casting concept is a no-brainer for Nintendo's upcoming Revolution console, as well. “We don't have a plan for the sequels yet, and of course, we'd love to continue this project,” exclaims Inoue. “We'll be listening to all of the feedback from players about how they feel about the new systems in LostMagic, including the Wi-Fi battles between Japan and overseas countries.” Whether LostMagic is a one-off title or the start of a new franchise, it's great to see game developers exploring new ideas rather than resting on their laurels. Expect LostMagic to land in North America this April.

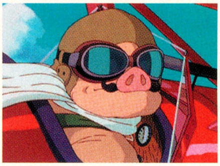
Yoshiharu Sato: Master At Work

Anime fans may find LostMagic's art style to be strangely familiar. That's because Yoshiharu Sato, the game's art director, also worked on a number of films with world-renowned animation group Studio Ghibli. Sato's unique style is visible in all his work, whether for film or for video games. “We have to make sure the story and art design match the game system,” says Sato. “That is the biggest difference from film projects, I think.” Below are some highlights from Sato's magical career.

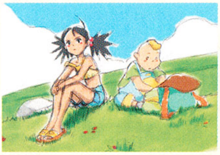
- ***My Neighbor Totoro***
  (1988, Film) - Animation director
- ***Kiki's Delivery Service***
  (1989, Film) Key animator



- ***Porco Rosso***
  (1992, Film) - Animator



- ***The Dog of Flanders***
  (1997, Film) - Animation director
- ***The Cat Returns***
  (2002, Film) - Key animator
- **Magic Pengel: The Quest for Color**
  (2003, PS2) - Art director



- **Graffiti Kingdom**
  (2005, PS2) - Art director
- **LostMagic**
  (2006, DS) - Art director

IMPROVING ON PERFECTION

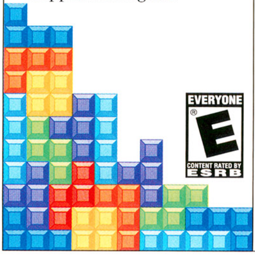
Think you're a Tetris purist? Think again—Tetris DS shakes up the original in seven groundbreaking ways.

By Steven Grimm

Don't Mess with Tetris! That'd be the bumper sticker on my car. Ever since the N64's Tetrisphere, I've insisted that you can't beat the original Tetris. At least until I played Tetris DS.

In Tetrisphere, a cool idea in theory, the player blasted at a 3-D orb by dropping blocks into place to reach the orb's core. It was a great game, but I refuse to let it into the Tetris family. Its sphere-spinning, lasers, dynamite, and techno soundtrack just didn't feel like Tetris.

But Tetris DS proves that it is possible to mess with Tetris and come out on top—we'll show you seven of its keys to success. So listen up, all you grizzled vets. This is the "new" Tetris you stopped waiting for.

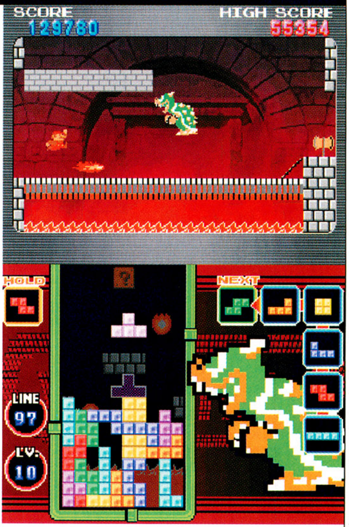


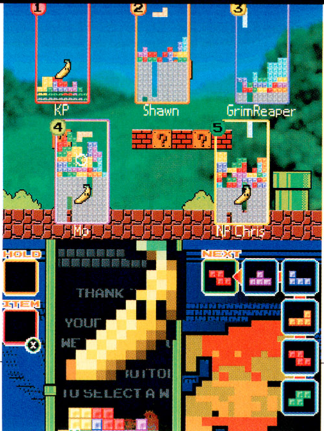
#1 RETRO FLAVOR DOESN'T SMACK OF TETRIS ATTACK

In 1996, the addictive Japanese game Panel de Pon got all dressed up for its North American debut with not one but two big changes: It was retitled as Tetris Attack, and the game's backgrounds were reflavored with images from Yoshi's Island: Super Mario World 2, which came out one year earlier. Tetris Attack had zero to do with Yoshi, but ya gotta have something pretty to look at while staring at puzzle play, right?

Tetris DS also goes into Nintendo territory for its six game modes. It's all about love for the Nintendo-retro phenomenon this time around, not just purty stuff. And we're talking serious retro love: The professor from Gyromite, the *ROB*-controlled game that came out in 1985, marches around Tetris DS's menu. Nice choice.

Most of the sounds and sights that jazz up Tetris DS's backgrounds are lovingly drawn from titles that date back 19 to 20 years: Super Mario Bros., Metroid, Donkey Kong, Balloon Fight, and The Legend of Zelda. And the retro doesn't stay only in the background—it also impacts gameplay, as you'll soon see.





#2 BLOCKS GET POWERED UP IN MULTIPLAYER

If you can't stand the idea of Tetris getting meddled with, worry not—you'll get your fill of the original gameplay in single-player Standard mode. But those who want to experience a laugh-a-licious collision of two game worlds should dive right into Standard's multiplayer mode. Sure, it's got the usual Tetris method of tripping up opponents (by simply playing Tetris well, which heaps blocks in foes' fields), but the mode adds six power-ups from the Nintendo playbook. Mushroom, check. Red shell, check. Banana, natch. Every power-up that hits the field gets a Tetris interpretation that feels so right. It all adds up to a Tetris turbocharge of grade-A multiplayer mayhem.

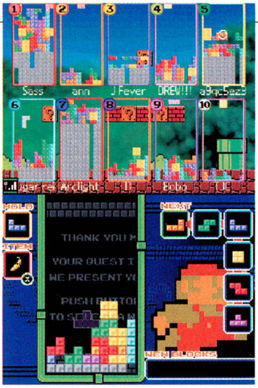
Tetris ® and © 1985–2006 Elorg, a Tetris Holding Company. Licensed to The Tetris Company. Game Design by Alexey Pajitnov. Logo Design by Roger Dean. All Rights Reserved. Certain new game elements developed by Nintendo, and any characters, sounds and video games originally owned by Nintendo: © 2006 Nintendo.

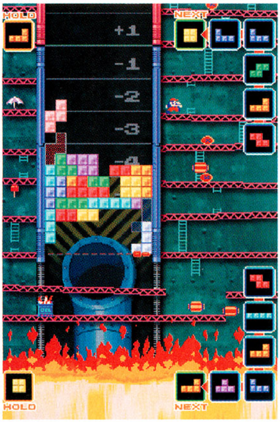
#3 WI-FI LETS YOU SHOW YOUR SKILLS ACROSS THE GLOBE

Think you're the world's best Tetris player just because you wore out your Game Boy with it? Join the crowd. In fact, join us over Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection—we'll figure this out once and for all. In a Worldwide Battle, you'll be connected with other players who have a similar skill ranking. If you win the battle, your ranking will rise; if you lose (or become disconnected in any way), your ranking will drop. You'll be able to play Standard matches in two ways over Wi-Fi: two-player battles without power-ups and four-player sessions with them. In addition, you can take on other Tetris players in the crazy two-player Push mode (#5 below). If you want to prove that you're the top dog just in your group of buds, you can also connect via Friend Battles—the game searches for any players online that are on your friend roster.

#4 YOU DON'T NEED TO OWN THE GAME TO PLAY IT

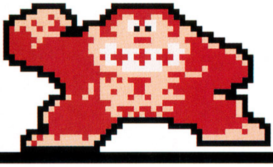
Nintendo is making it really, really easy to get into Tetris DS. Yes, the DS Download Stations now in many stores (see nintendo.com for participating locations) distribute demo versions for free. But the thing that's going to make Tetris as omnipresent as oxygen is download play: One card can spark multiplayer Standard sessions for up to 10 players. And the same goes for Mission mode, which awards points to the first player to nail specific tasks. There's nothing like 10 Tetris fiends trying to be the first to complete a two-deep clear with the red block. One more mode, the two-player Push, also gets in on the download action.

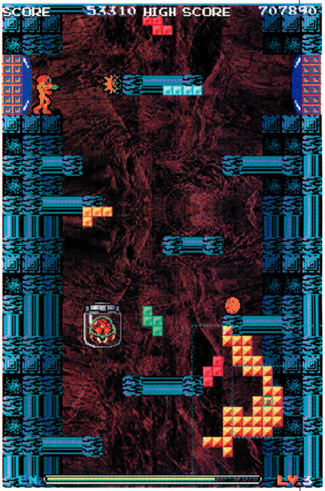




#5 PUSH MODE FIGHTS THE 800-POUND GORILLA

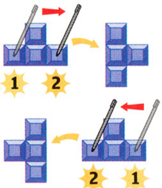
And by 800-pound gorilla, we don't mean DK, whose NES game is shown in the background of Push mode. We mean the original Tetris. Can a new mode ever steal top billing from original Tetris? Push has a shot. In rethinking Tetris as a shoving match (versus the CPU or another player), the mode might just be the perfect 2P spin on the classic game. Rather than competing on separate fields, the pair play on opposite ends of the same one. As blocks drop into a midfield mass, players' block-clears also shove the pile closer to the others' end zone. Brutal Tetris at its very best.

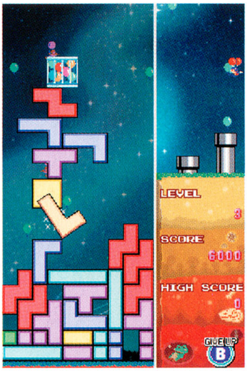




#6 TOUCH COULD'VE GONE SO WRONG, BUT DOESN'T

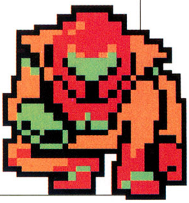
Touch-ified Tetris could have resulted in a lot of bad ideas. Can you imagine using your stylus to play a superspeedy, intense session of standard Tetris . . . turning plummeting blocks by drawing circles around them, for instance? Praise the Tetris gods that there aren't any crass concepts in Tetris DS, just one superbly designed one: Touch mode. It's pure puzzle, not puzzle-action, and it asks you to dismantle a tower of blocks to get to the cage full of ballons at the top of the stack. Using the stylus, you'll drag blocks left and right, and rotate by tapping one end or the other. It's fun and cerebral—and designed entirely from the ground up with touch in mind.





#7 YOU CAN TAKE ON THE LOVE CHILD OF TETRIS AND METROID

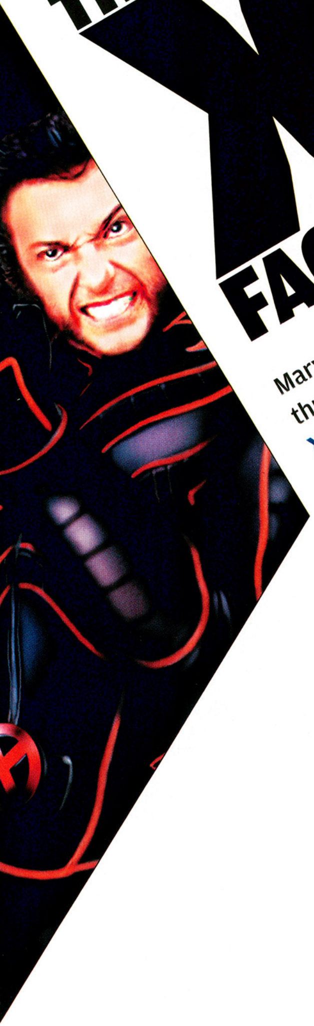
If Push mode is the best 2P spin on the original Tetris, Catch mode is the most wonderfully insane single-player spin. In it, you rotate the block *pile* and attempt to dock it with the falling blocks. Do so efficiently, and you'll blow up chunks of the pile. Hmmm. It *does* sound a little like Tetrisphere. So how can I consider the N64 game an abomination of Tetris and the DS mode an inspired creation? It must be the 2-D look—or the joy of wiping out falling Metroids with Tetris explosions. Ah, yes. That's it.



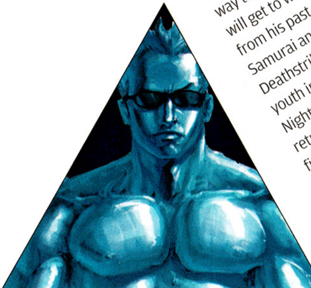
THE X^3 FACTOR

Marvel's mutants evolve into three different forms with **X-Men: The Official Game**, coming to Nintendo GameCube, DS, and GBA.

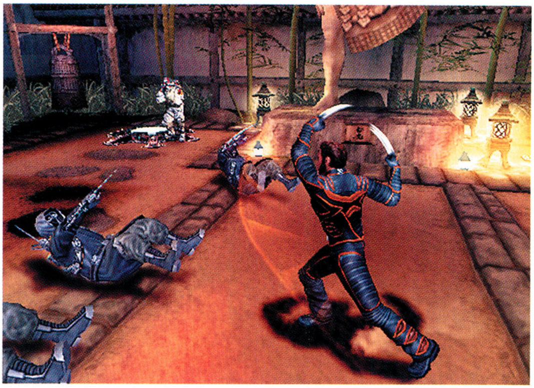
By Chris Hoffman



Three just might be the X-Men's lucky number. May 26 marks the theatrical release of the third X-Men feature film; three X-Men mainstays—Wolverine, Iceman, and Nightcrawler—are starring in the accompanying games from Activision; and three very different action-packed experiences are coming to Nintendo GameCube, DS, and Game Boy Advance. Though the three versions of X-Men: The Official Game offer diverse types of gameplay, all of them share a common storyline that ties together the second and third X-Men films. Cowritten by comic-book legend Chris Claremont and X2 and X3 screenwriter Zak Penn, the plot picks up at Stryker's decimated Alkali Lake base, where the X-Men are attempting to retrieve the stolen parts of Cerebro, and spans all the way to the opening scene of X3. Along the way, fans will get to witness Wolverine dealing with rivalries from his past (such as clashes with the Silver Samurai and the possible return of Lady Deathstrike), watch Iceman's evolution from eager youth into accomplished X-Man, and experience Nightcrawler's final missions with the team before he returns to a life of peace. Claws will slash, furry blue fists will fly, and a number of adversaries will learn the meaning of "chill out." X-Men: The Official Game could very well be the marvelous mutants' best video game outing yet.



Triple Trouble



The action in the GCN version of the X-Men game, designed by Z-Axis and developed by Hypnos, is divided into distinct stages that focus on a specific playable character, with each providing a different style of gameplay that takes advantage of the X-Man's talents.

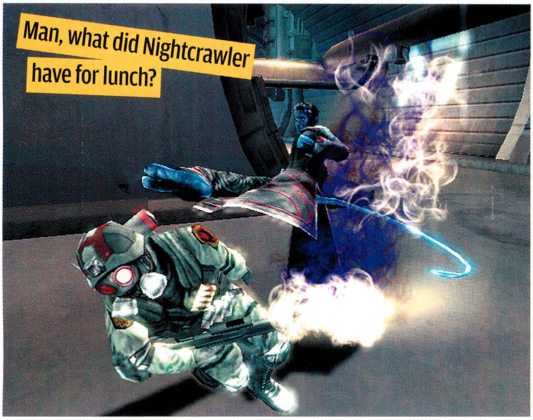
Wolverine's stages are about pure, brutal action; he uses his claws to slice through enemies and environmental objects alike, and foes violently fall before him thanks to the Havok physics engine. The combat is wild and relentless for both Wolverine and his enemies—fortunately, Wolvie's renowned healing factor lets him regenerate health depleted through most injuries (which Activision calls "incidental damage"). Only when Wolverine takes a big hit (called "major damage") does his health permanently decrease. However, even that can be nullified when his bloodlust reaches its peak and he enters Feral mode: The edges of the screen go blood red, an advanced healing factor kicks in, and Wolvie temporarily gains a completely new, more aggressive move set. By chaining together attacks, players can extend Feral mode and gain even more advantages from its effects.

Nightcrawler's stages, by contrast, are more about agility than in-your-face fighting, although they've still got their share of excitement. The blue, elflike X-Man's teleportation power gets a thorough workout in his stages; with a puff of brimstone, he can teleport up to enemies or onto objects—lampposts, rafters, rails—using a fluid, intuitive line-of-sight system, and his acrobatic fighting moves are perfect for knocking foes for a loop. Nightcrawler's stages pack diversity, as well; some require a more stealthy approach, and others include additional objectives, like a bomb-defusing level set on the Brooklyn Bridge, where 'Crawler battles clones of *X3* movie villain Multiple Man. Nightcrawler's also aided in battle by nonplayable characters, like Storm, who can be called in for an assist with the press of a button.

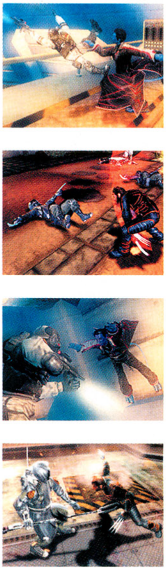
Iceman provides action of a completely different sort. All of the young X-Man's levels are based around his ice-slide maneuver (he doesn't have any on-foot missions), which he'll use to careen smoothly through the skies of wide-open 3-D environments—which are usually on fire. From his lofty position, he'll be able to unleash ice blasts, shooter-style, to extinguish flames and battle enemies, among them fire serpents, birds of flame, and, not surprisingly, Pyro. By the time Iceman's done with his massive tasks—such as preventing a nuclear meltdown—he'll be ready to take his place as a full-fledged member of the X-Men.

In addition to its three characters and styles of play, the GCN version of X-Men adds appeal through the use of stylized cut-scenes and authentic voices from the films' actors. Hugh Jackman (Wolverine), Alan Cumming (Nightcrawler), and Shawn Ashmore (Iceman) all reprise their roles, as do some of the villains, including Aaron Stanford as Pyro.

Too bad the US Olympic team didn't have Iceman instead of Bode Miller.



Man, what did Nightcrawler have for lunch?



Nothing goes with the stench of brimstone like a mighty boot to the face.

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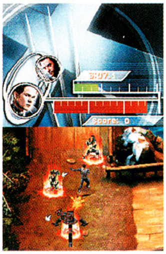
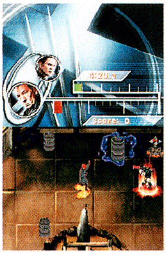
Point and Pulverize

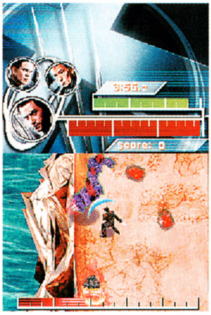
While the console version of X-Men focuses on each character's individuality, the DS version stresses teamwork while using the best X-Man for the job. Presented from a top-down perspective, the DS game lets players switch between Iceman, Wolverine, and Magneto (who's playable only in the DS version) on the fly, using each one's strengths to overcome the enemy; Iceman's projectiles are the answer for flying foes, for example. Nightcrawler's not being left out, but his missions are solo.

Gameplay in the DS version is especially interesting; players move their character with either the Control Pad or the face buttons (for left-handers) and fight enemies by tapping them on the touch screen, which will cause the active X-Man to lock on to them and send attacks in the enemy's direction. By tapping their character, players can activate additional special powers; Nightcrawler, for instance, will enter teleport mode, where time seems to freeze as he moves about, defeating foes in the blink of an eye.

With more than 40 levels, unlockable modes like Boss Attack and Survival, and visual unity with its GCN counterpart (achieved by using models and textures that are scaled down from the console version), X-Men on DS is packed with both features and innovation.







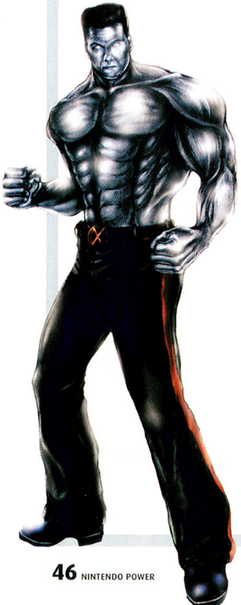
X-CLUSIVE DS CHARACTER

MAGNETIC MASTERMIND

Born Eric Magnus Lehnsherr, Magneto is the master of magnetism and the leader of the Brotherhood of Mutants (Brotherhood of Evil Mutants for comic-book fans). Though he's often been considered the X-Men's greatest foe—his rivalry with Professor Xavier is well-chronicled—Magneto teamed up with the X-Men in the *X2* film to take on the mutant-hating William Stryker. The alliance appeared to be broken when Magneto attempted to manipulate Professor X into destroying the world's human populace, but now he's back, teaming up with the X-Men in the DS version of X-Men: The Official Game. As Magneto, players are able to use magnetic powers to pick up objects in the environment, such as explosive barrels or mines, and use them as weapons against enemies.

X-CLUSIVE GBA CHARACTER

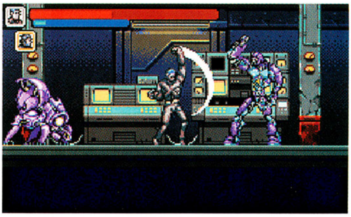
THE REAL MAN OF STEEL

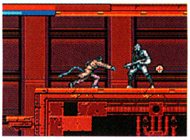


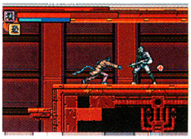
The Russian powerhouse called Colossus possesses the ability to turn his body into an organic steel-like substance, granting him the strength to lift upwards of 70 tons, and making him almost invulnerable. In the films, Colossus is one of the more-mature students at Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters, and he proved his "metal" in *X2* by protecting his younger classmates from Stryker's soldiers. In the GBA version of X-Men: The Official Game, Colossus (real name: Piotr Nikolaievitch Rasputin) is a formal member of the team, and although he isn't as agile as his comrades, he packs quite a punch as he aids them in their missions. Colossus also appears as a nonplayable character in the GCN version of the game.

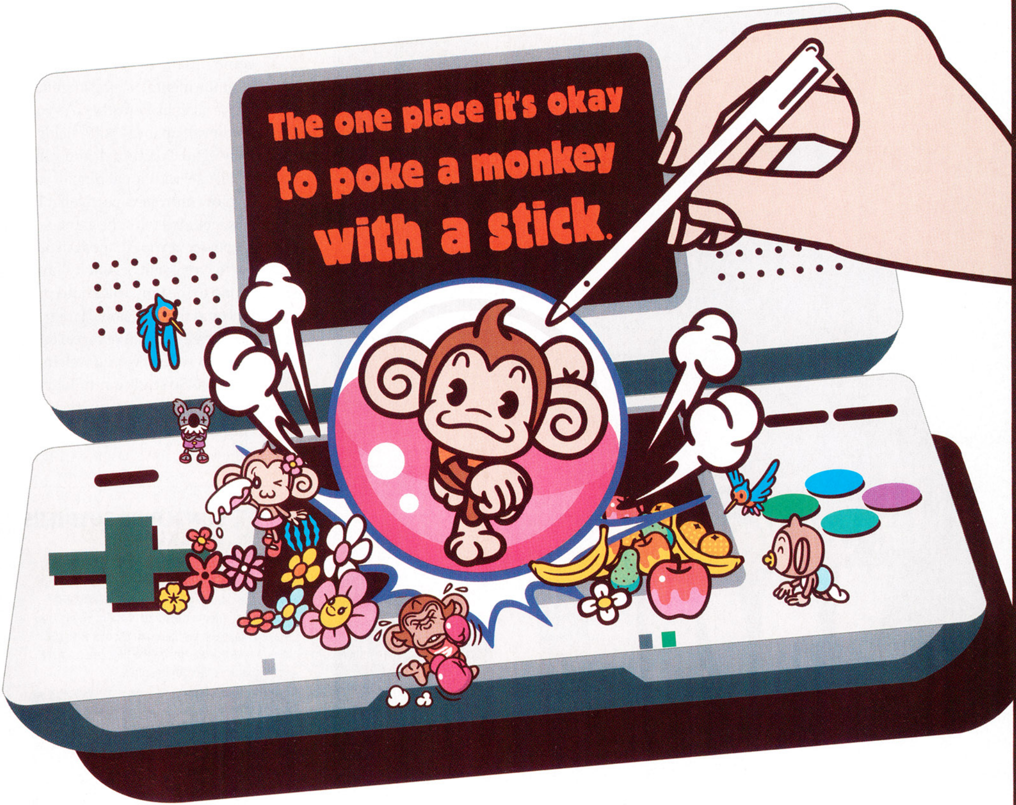
Advanced Genetics

Traditional, 2-D side-scrolling gameplay provides the foundation for the GBA version of X-Men, which features Iceman, Nightcrawler, Wolverine, and Colossus laying the smack down on legions of enemy guards and heavies from the movies and comics, including the Sentinels, Mystique, and X-23 (a female clone of Wolverine who's exclusive to the GBA version). Each character has different attributes (speed, jumping ability, etc.) and character-specific attacks—Iceman's ice-based melee attacks contrast nicely with Nightcrawler's acrobatic fisticuffs—and players can swap between any teammates on the current roster by using the L Button. The X-Men also have an overdrive gauge they can use for a temporary strength boost, and each character has a special move that's activated by pressing the A and B Buttons simultaneously—the most significant being Nightcrawler's teleport, which is necessary for navigating some of the game's 20-plus mazelike stages. Additional features, like the game's Danger Room, which players can load up with the enemies of their choice, and cut-scenes drawn by *Uncanny X-Men* artist Chris Bachalo, should prove especially appealing to X-Men fans.








The one place it's okay
to poke a monkey
with a stick.

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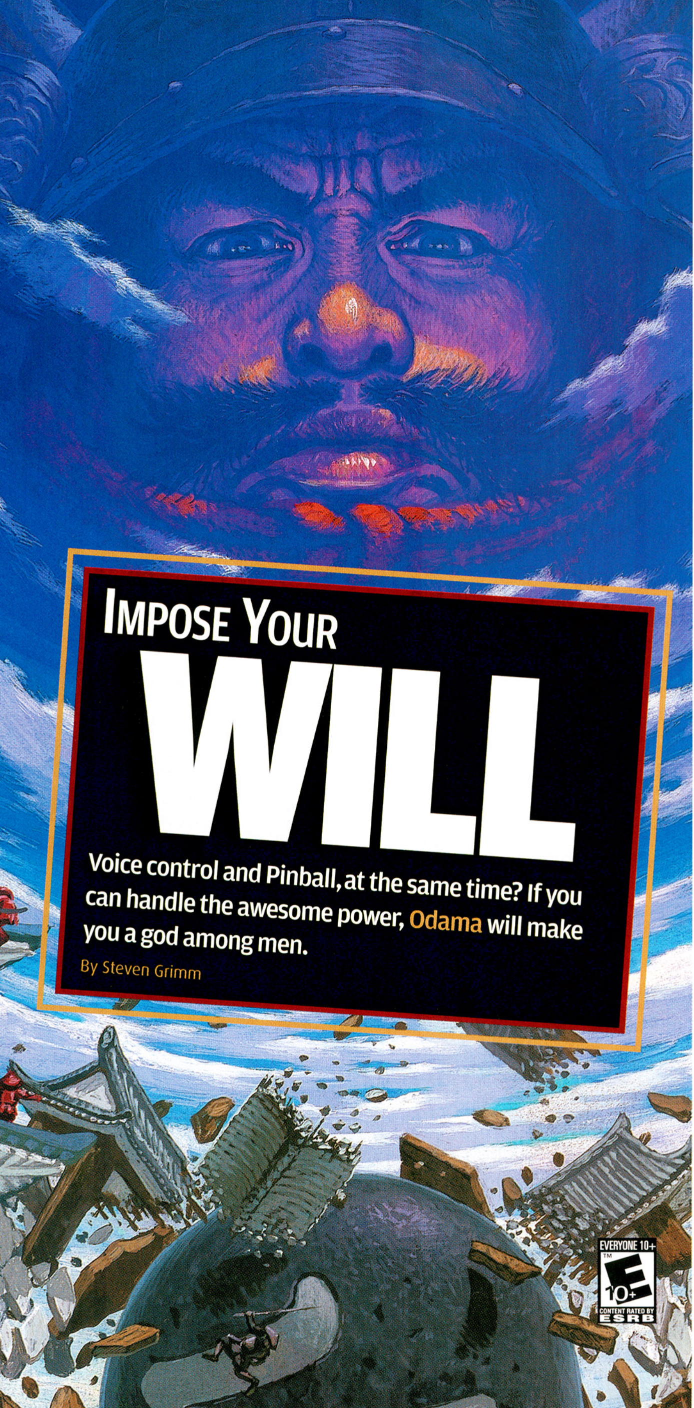


IMPOSE YOUR WILL

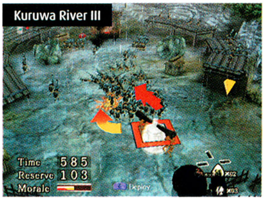
Voice control and Pinball, at the same time? If you can handle the awesome power, Odama will make you a god among men.

By Steven Grimm

Hard-core gamers are going to have a field day with Odama. The title combines the twitch gameplay of pinball with the mental pacing of military strategy. It's a rush like no other. As you besiege medieval Japanese battlefields with the powerful Odama ball and your troops, you'll use traditional pinball controls and voice control, respectively. (The GCN Mic is included with the game.) With such power at your disposal, you'll find it easy to wreak havoc. But it's not always a snap to see how voice- and pinball control (and the occasional rice ball) can be used strategically. We reveal essential combos that will serve you well in many scenarios. So study our military tactics, then get out there and make them respect your authority!

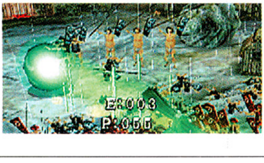
CONSCRIBE SOLDIERS QUICKLY

Maintaining a reserve of soldiers is key, and you'll do that by stealing enemy troops. When the Odama glows green, it will steal—er, conscribe—enemies instead of killing them. One way to make the pinball change color is to run over a heart power-up on the field, then smack your military bell with the pinball.


Kuruwa River III

1. "March right (or left)!": The vocal order to march directs your bell crew (who, ultimately, you must direct through a gate to clear a mission). Their bell will turn white after the pinball hits a heart; then you'll have to hit the bell on either flank to earn that green pinball. It's much easier when the bell is turned, so order the crew to turn right or left to expose the bell's flank.

2. Sideswipe the bell: Quickly whack the bell, then mow down as many enemies as you can.



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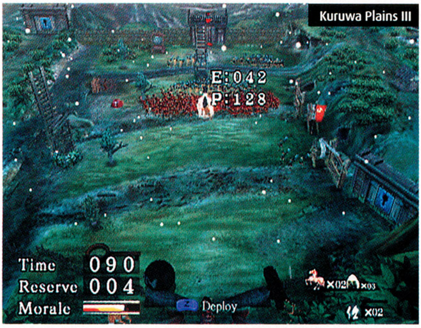
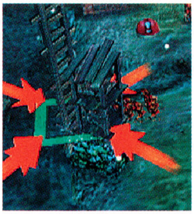
二 MAKE SURGICAL STRIKES

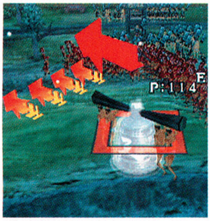
As you wreak pinball havoc, your bell crew will plod forward and your soldiers (red) will follow it. But what if you want them all to travel along a complex path? For example, as shown below, you may want them to back up, then use the upright ladder on the left to access an alternate victory gate.





1. "Rally!": The rally command splits off a handful of soldiers to tackle a task at a specific location. You can move the cursor to any available task locations to indicate your soldiers' destinations. Additionally, you can always rally men to your bell if they're too scattered. In this case, we want a few guys to tackle the ladder, so rally them on the ladder. Once there, they'll knock it down quickly, creating a makeshift bridge across the river.

2. Bash the key house: Once the ladder has fallen, shoot the pinball across it hard enough to make it roll up the left path, which leads to the alternate gate. Along the way, it will crush a hut that hides the gate's massive key.

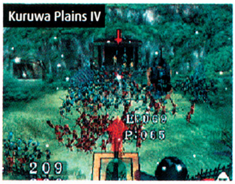


3. "Rally!": After the key falls onto the ground, you can toggle the cursor onto it. Do so, then rally more men to it. They'll carry the key to the left gate and unlock it.

4. "Fall back! March left! Advance!": With the path prepared, it's time to give your bell crew orders to change course to the alternate gate. Using the above three commands in almost seamless succession will cause your bell crew (and any soldiers still with it) to back up and redirect its course. Tell the crew to back up—several times, if it's very far upfield—to bring the guys back to the ladder's general area. Then use one march command to turn the crew. A turned team will soon reorient back to a northward crawl unless you give it another order. So quickly give the order to advance so the crew moves in the appropriate direction. If you've had the crew fall back far enough, telling it to advance—several times, if it's far from the ladder—will hurry the guys across the makeshift bridge. When the crew trends back to a northward crawl, it'll be heading straight for the alternate gate. Sounds tricky, but you'll use this technique often, so you'll get the hang of it.

5. "Press forward!": When your bell crew reaches a gate, it'll wait for you to give the command to push through—always a satisfying ending.

三 STUN AND GO FORTH



This happens a lot in Odama: Many enemy soldiers (black) stand between your guys and their goal. One dirty way to break through the impasse is to ring the bell with the pinball to release a foe-stunning percussive blast.

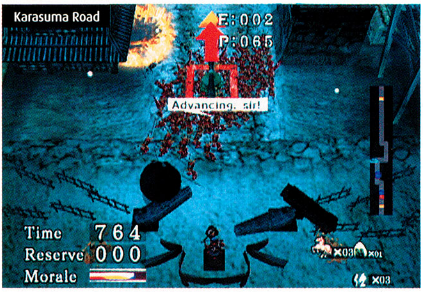
1. "March right (or left)!": The first two steps are the same as for getting a good hit on the glowing-white bell to power up a green Odama. First, order the bell crew right or left to expose the bell's side.

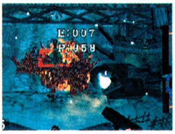
2. Sideswipe the bell: When you hit the bell, it'll emit shockwaves that don't affect your troops but do send the enemy's guys flying, stunning them briefly.

3. "Rally!": That gives you time to send your men through the fallen foes to get at a target, a boss in this case. Rally them on the boss before the foes rise.

四 ADVANCE OR PRESS FORWARD?

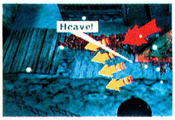
Two vocal commands urge the bell crew and its attending soldiers to move in the direction they're pointed: "advance" and "press forward." Knowing which to use in a given situation is important, but not obvious at first.





1. "Advance . . . advance!": Advancing is not only about moving in the team's current direction; it's also about giving your guys a brief burst of speed. That's often essential, such as in the above example, where flame archers are raining down devastating damage on your team from a position far up a road that's out of your pinball's reach. Giving the "advance" command every few seconds will keep your men hurrying. Once your crew is far enough down the road, you'll be able to get at and blast apart the archers' platform with your pinball.

"Press forward . . . press forward!": Pressing forward is generally used when your team comes up against the enemy's. The command urges your team to shove the other one hard, which can inch you closer toward an important position. For example, farther down the same road, there's a mysterious door on the left-hand wall. If foes blocked the way, shouting "press forward" could push them through—no need for pinball casualties.

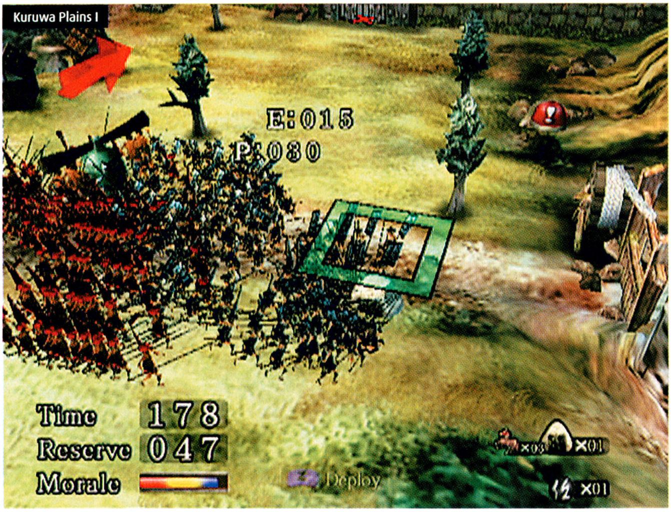


五 RICE 'N' ROLL

The pinball cannon also fires rice balls, if you've collected the starchy power-ups from the battlefield. Used in conjunction with the Odama itself, rice balls can be a tasty treat that can lure widely distributed enemies to a single location—making them easy prey for a well-placed shot from the pinball.

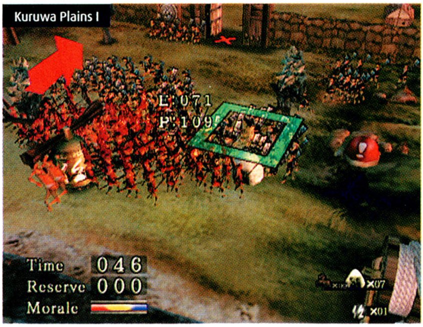
1. Aim and shoot the rice ball: When you possess rice balls, you can activate the cursor that's used to fire the Odama at the start of battle. Fire the rice ball into the midst of scattered enemy troops—they'll go nuts climbing all over the snack.

2. Flatten the pile of foes: Flip the pinball straight at the rice ball—it'll cause many of your enemies to meet their maker. As the pinball reaches its zenith and starts rolling back down the field, tilt the field with the C Stick to bring the ball back across the rice-ball spot to crush any stragglers.



六 RICE, RALLY, AND REROUTE

Soldiers on the field will tend to protect the bell. On wide-open fields, where waves of enemies can flood in from several directions, setting up a human wall to block foes on one of those fronts to create a bottleneck can reduce the free-for-all mayhem on the field.



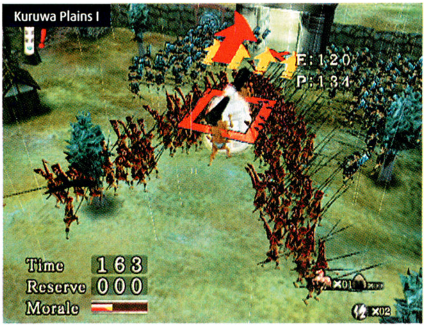
1. Aim and shoot the rice ball. Location is key with this strategy. Target the spot where you want your human wall to go up—ideally halfway between many of your men and an incoming wave of foes. Then fire the rice ball at the spot.

2. "Rally!": If you rally your men on rice, they'll feed on it and regain morale. If morale drops low—the result of giving them lethal commands or running them down with the pinball—they won't listen to orders. In the scenario shown above, they'll also engage the advancing enemy. Voilà, a human wall.

3. "Press forward!": In the above example, the wall cuts the number of foes that block your final gate approach, which makes all the difference between pressing forward to victory, and getting pushed back by a too-massive defense.

七 CHARGE TO CARVE THROUGH

You won't have all 11 commands when you begin the main story. You'll earn them as you progress. We've shown many of our examples in Free Play mode, which unlocks at the end of the story and allows you to return to any mission using all commands—such as the superpowerful call to "charge!"



1. "Charge!": The "charge" command is easily confused with "press forward." It turns your team of soldiers into a massive wedge that pierces through an opposing mass. But they can't cleave through a force that is too overwhelming. So pick your battles carefully, or else you'll burn through team morale quickly as your soldiers lose faith in a leader that uses them carelessly.

2. "Press forward!": Following up a charge by pressing forward can turn that wedge into a full-fledged breach—which is handy when your bell crew is just a smidge away from a victory gate.

NINTENDO POWER

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

Odama

EVERYONE 10+
Violence
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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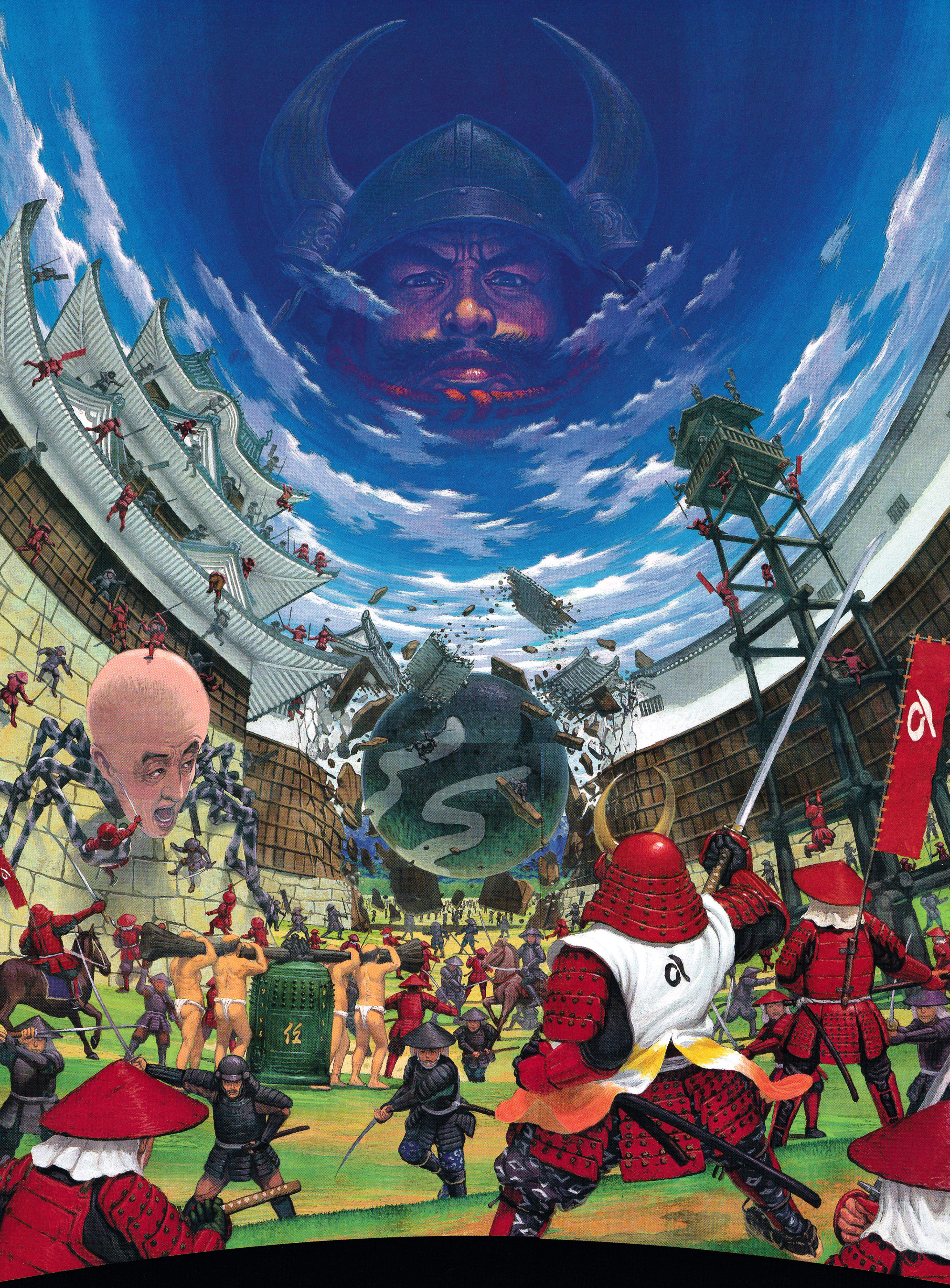
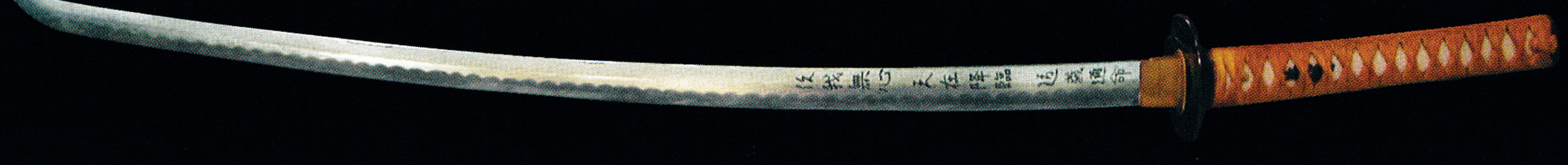


The Battle Begins…



Though the Kagetora camp had few soldiers and fewer provisions, they possessed two secrets their longtime foes knew nothing about. One was a Yamanouchi family treasure, a gigantic ball known as the Odama. The other secret was the doctrine of Ninten-do, the Way of Heavenly Duty.

NINTENDO POWER

NINTENDO GAMECUBE™

Odama™

EVERYONE 10+
E 10+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence

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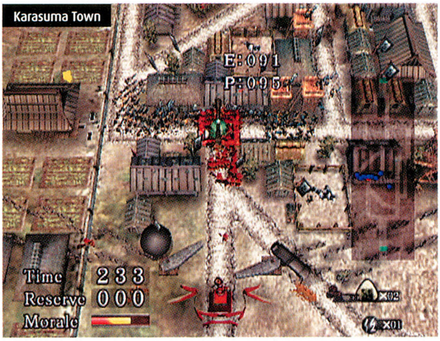
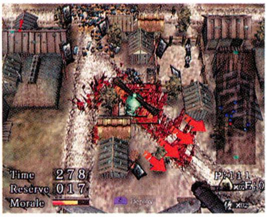
八 TURN YOUR TEAM ON A DIME

In certain circumstances, you may not want to fall back to a lower position and then turn direction. You may need to make a swift pivot in place and aim your team in a backwards marching direction, which calls for multiple march commands. Karasuma Town provides the perfect illustration of the concept. In it, your bell crew will walk down alleys only, no matter how many of its buildings you raze with the pinball. At some forks, a simple "march right" or "march left" will do, but sometimes you may want to turn 150 degrees or more. And to do that, you'll want to issue a steady stream of "march" commands.



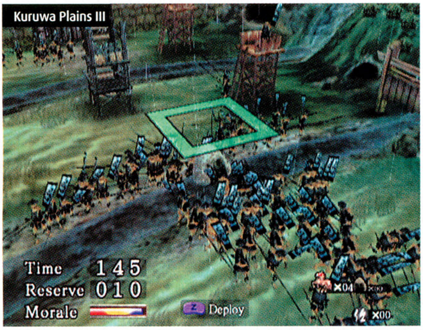


1. "March right! March right!": Whichever direction you turn your team, say the appropriate "march" command repeatedly—clearly and crisply. You'll see the direction arrow move 60 to 90 degrees each time you say it. For a radical turn, two times will do the trick. Three times or more will turn your team so far clockwise it's shorter to use "march left" instead, and simply say it once or twice.

2. "Advance!": As always, your crew will quickly adjust its direction unless you tell it to walk in the direction you've turned it. So follow up by barking an "advance" command to send them down the angled path.

九 FLOOD OUT THE VERMIN

After you capture a river floodgate, you can control it with two voice commands. That's helpful for putting up a water barrier that prevents enemies from crossing, or for removing it when you want your own troops to cross. You can also use the river to make rice balls into killer carbs.



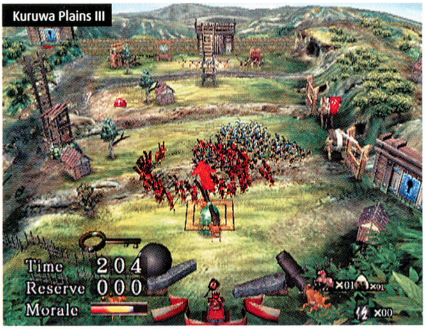
1. Aim and shoot the rice ball: When the river is flowing, enemies will accumulate on its far shore, waiting for a chance to cross. When a mob gathers, fire a rice ball in front of the hungry crowd.

2. "Close the gate . . . flood the river!": Shut off the water. The mob will surge over the rice ball and stay there. You won't have much time before the hungry soldiers devour the entire thing, so open the floodgates immediately and see the foes flushed away to their watery graves. A few soldiers may wash up elsewhere; keep an eye on them.

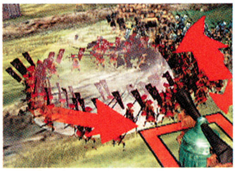
3. Crush the remaining foes: The river won't do away with everyone. Enemies who were unable to reach the rice ball will be left standing on the banks. But they'll still be in a dense cluster—fire the pinball into the poor suckers.

十 SPANK AND DESTROY

Typically, when waves of soldiers clash, you'll see only a slow erosion of their numbers on each side due to skirmishes. But there's one soldier movement that wipes out a wave of foes almost immediately: the "flank and destroy" command that you'll learn late in the game.



1. "Rally! Rally! Rally! Rally!": No, that's not a broken record. Before you flank and destroy a mob, you'll want to group a ton of your soldiers around your bell crew. If your guys are too spread out, the flank-and-destroy move won't work. So rally until you've pulled in enough men to execute the move.



2. "Flank and destroy!": The move works only if your men can encircle the enemy mob. If your fellows fail, their morale will suffer. But if they succeed, you'll pull off the most wicked move in Odama: The mob will vanish. Eerie and deadly!

2005 Nintendo Power Awards

The votes are in, the ballots have been counted, and we're proud to present the winners of the 2005 Nintendo Power Awards as chosen by the NP staff and our readers.

WINNER

GAME OF THE YEAR – GCN

NP'S PICK

Resident Evil 4

READERS' PICK

Resident Evil 4

As much as we enjoyed the other nominees in this category, Resident Evil 4 was NP's unanimous choice for GCN Game of the Year. It also won the reader vote by a nearly two-to-one margin. We don't want to spoil anything, but this isn't the only award Leon and company will walk away with. That being the case, we need to save some of our glowing hyperbole for later.

WINNER

GAME OF THE YEAR – DS

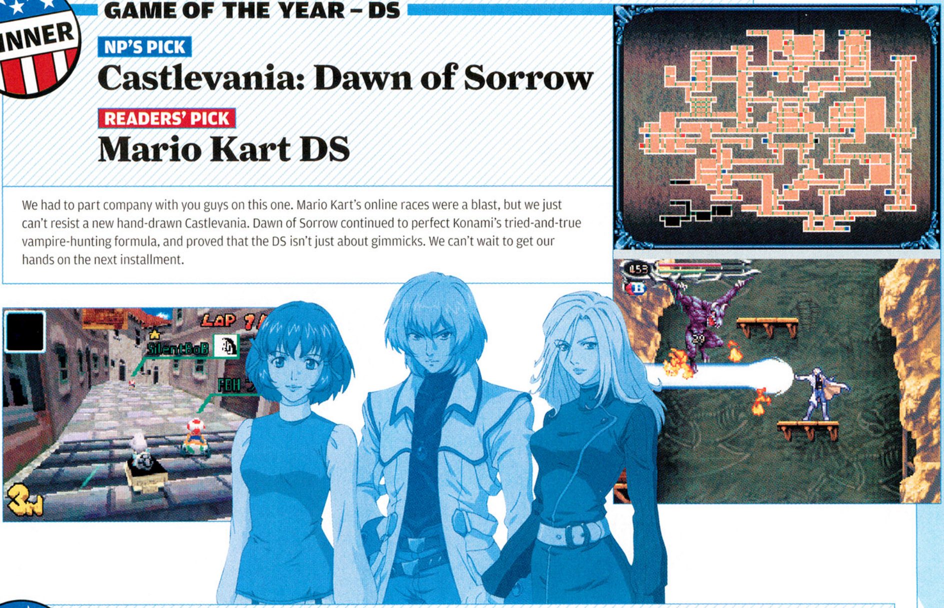
NP'S PICK

Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow

READERS' PICK

Mario Kart DS

We had to part company with you guys on this one. Mario Kart's online races were a blast, but we just can't resist a new hand-drawn Castlevania. Dawn of Sorrow continued to perfect Konami's tried-and-true vampire-hunting formula, and proved that the DS isn't just about gimmicks. We can't wait to get our hands on the next installment.



WINNER

GAME OF THE YEAR – GBA

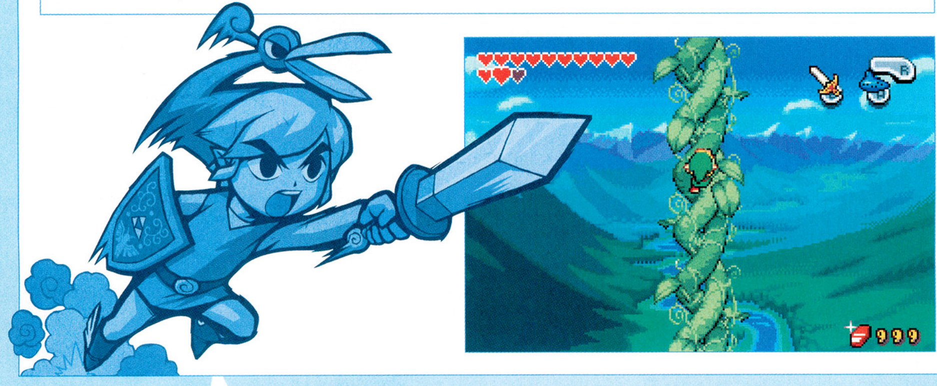
NP'S PICK

The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap

READERS' PICK

The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap

Last year certainly started off with a bang. The first two weeks of 2005 gave us both our GCN Game of the Year and our GBA Game of the Year. In the weeks and months that followed, The Minish Cap continued to occupy our SPs more than any other cartridge thanks to its myriad side quests and one of the best overworlds in a Zelda game to date.



BEST GRAPHICS – GCN

NP'S PICK

Resident Evil 4

READERS' PICK

Resident Evil 4

Resident Evil 4's brilliant visuals grab you by the throat and draw you in like no other game of this generation. And it's not just the sky-high polygon counts and masterful texture work. It's the little touches, like the elaborate reload animations for each of Leon's weapons, that create one of the most convincing (and horrifying) experiences in video game history. Nothing else even comes close.

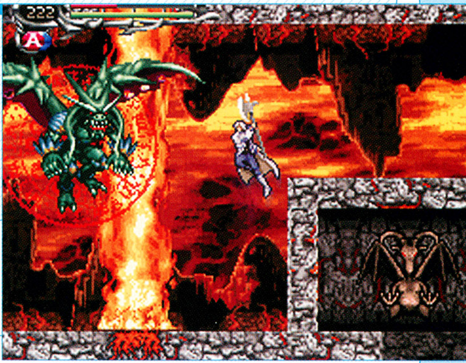
BEST GRAPHICS – GBA / DS

NP'S PICK

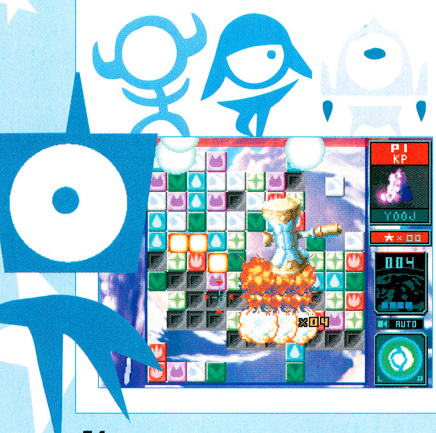
Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow

READERS' PICK

Mario Kart DS



The DS proved that 2-D games can still impress, and its greatest piece of evidence in that regard is Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow. The beautiful, richly colored backgrounds and intricate character sprites make us wish games like this weren't so darn rare these days. Mario Kart's smooth 3-D is remarkable from a technical standpoint, but Dawn of Sorrow is like a work of art.



BEST MUSIC

NP'S PICK

Meteos

READERS' PICK

Tony Hawk's American Wasteland

Although it may not be the type of soundtrack you can just sit around and listen to, Meteos's hypnotic tunes are a subtle yet important part of the experience. When you get into a groove and start playing well, it's reflected in the music so you almost feel like you're composing it yourself. Our readers were more impressed by THAW's impressive selection of licensed tracks.

BEST SOUND / VOICE ACTING

NP'S PICK

Resident Evil 4

READERS' PICK

Resident Evil 4

You take shelter in a small cottage, but the crazed villagers pound at the door, shouting murderously in a foreign tongue. As you try to barricade the entrance, you hear a window break upstairs, followed by the sound of heavy footsteps overhead. Just when you think things can't get any worse, the chainsaw starts revving up. . . .

BEST RPG / STRATEGY GAME

NP'S PICK

Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance

READERS' PICK

Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time

We chose deep strategic gameplay, a stirring orchestral soundtrack and an epic tale of revenge and genocide. You chose plumbers hurling babies. In all seriousness, this was actually one of the most difficult categories for the NP crew to select a winner in . Both games were brilliant in very different ways, and a number of us favored the comic hijinx of Mario & Luigi.

BEST ADVENTURE GAME

NP'S PICK

Resident Evil 4

READERS' PICK

The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap

We're a bit baffled by the readers' pick on this one (skip to the overall Game of the Year to find out why). Maybe you chose Minish Cap because Zelda is synonymous with adventure. Or maybe you just wanted to see a game other than RE4 take home a couple of awards. Whatever the case, rest assured that Congress is expected to launch a full investigation.

BEST PLATFORMER

NP'S PICK

Sonic Rush

READERS' PICK

Shadow the Hedgehog

Sega's speedy hedgehogs ran away with the platformer category this year. Though we enjoyed Shadow's solo debut more than most other critics did, Sonic Rush took the series back to its roots and delivered one of the best pure platforming experiences in years. In 2006, we expect longtime rival Mario to strike back.

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BEST SHOOTER / ACTION GAME

NP'S PICK

Gunstar Super Heroes

READERS' PICK

Star Fox Assault

SCORE
11597

We loved Star Fox Assault's flying stages, but Gunstar Super Heroes was the best game no one played in 2005. Treasure's latest gem pushed the GBA to its limits with an action tour de force the likes of which we never thought possible on the tiny handheld. If you've yet to play it, do yourself a favor and pick it up. If you're one of the few who already has, congratulations. You have awesome taste.

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BOMB 3
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BEST SPORTS / RACING GAME

NP'S PICK

Mario Kart DS

READERS' PICK

Mario Kart DS

Mario Kart has made a pretty big splash on every major Nintendo platform over the last 15 years, and the DS version is certainly no exception. The series pioneered a unique brand of racing that remains as addictive as ever. Bring on Mario Kart Revolution!

BEST NEW CONCEPT

NP'S PICK

Trauma Center: Under the Knife

READERS' PICK

Nintendogs

The word "innovation" was bandied about quite a bit in 2005, but a number of developers walked the walk with creative new concepts that were as fun as they were imaginative. Not surprisingly, most of those progressive ideas found a home on the DS, helping the system deliver on its promise. While our readers preferred cuddling with their virtual pooches, we were busy saving lives in the operating room.

He sat!

BEST MULTIPLAYER

NP'S PICK

Mario Kart DS

READERS' PICK

Mario Kart DS

Whether it was interoffice LAN battles or schooling our readers via Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection, Mario Kart DS was responsible for more lost productivity at the magazine than any other game. In fact, we're gonna cut this short so we can go play another race. . . .

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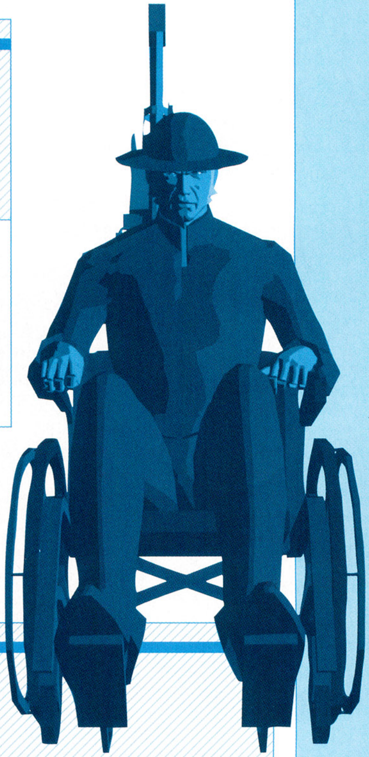


BEST NEW CHARACTER

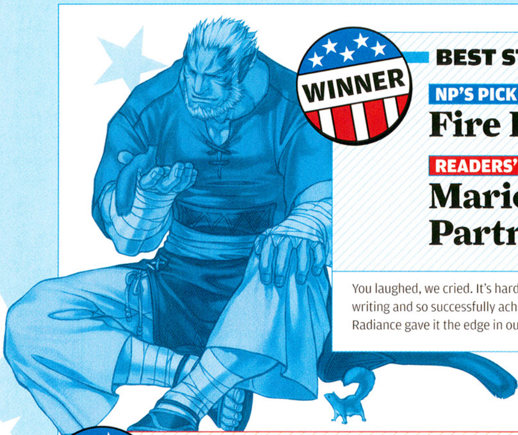
NP'S PICK

Harman Smith (Killer 7)

READERS' PICK

Ezlo (The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap)

How can you not give the award to a 60-year-old assassin with seven fractured personalities and a high-powered rifle attached to his wheelchair? Harman Smith is the personification of badass, however unconventionally, and the driving force behind one of the most daringly original works in recent memory. We'll take that over a talking hat any day.



WINNER

BEST STORY / WRITING

NP'S PICK

Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance

READERS' PICK

Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time

You laughed, we cried. It's hard to choose between a comedy and a drama when both games boast such superb writing and so successfully achieve what they set out to do. Ultimately, though, the superior narrative in Path of Radiance gave it the edge in our (misty) eyes.

WINNER

GAME OF THE YEAR

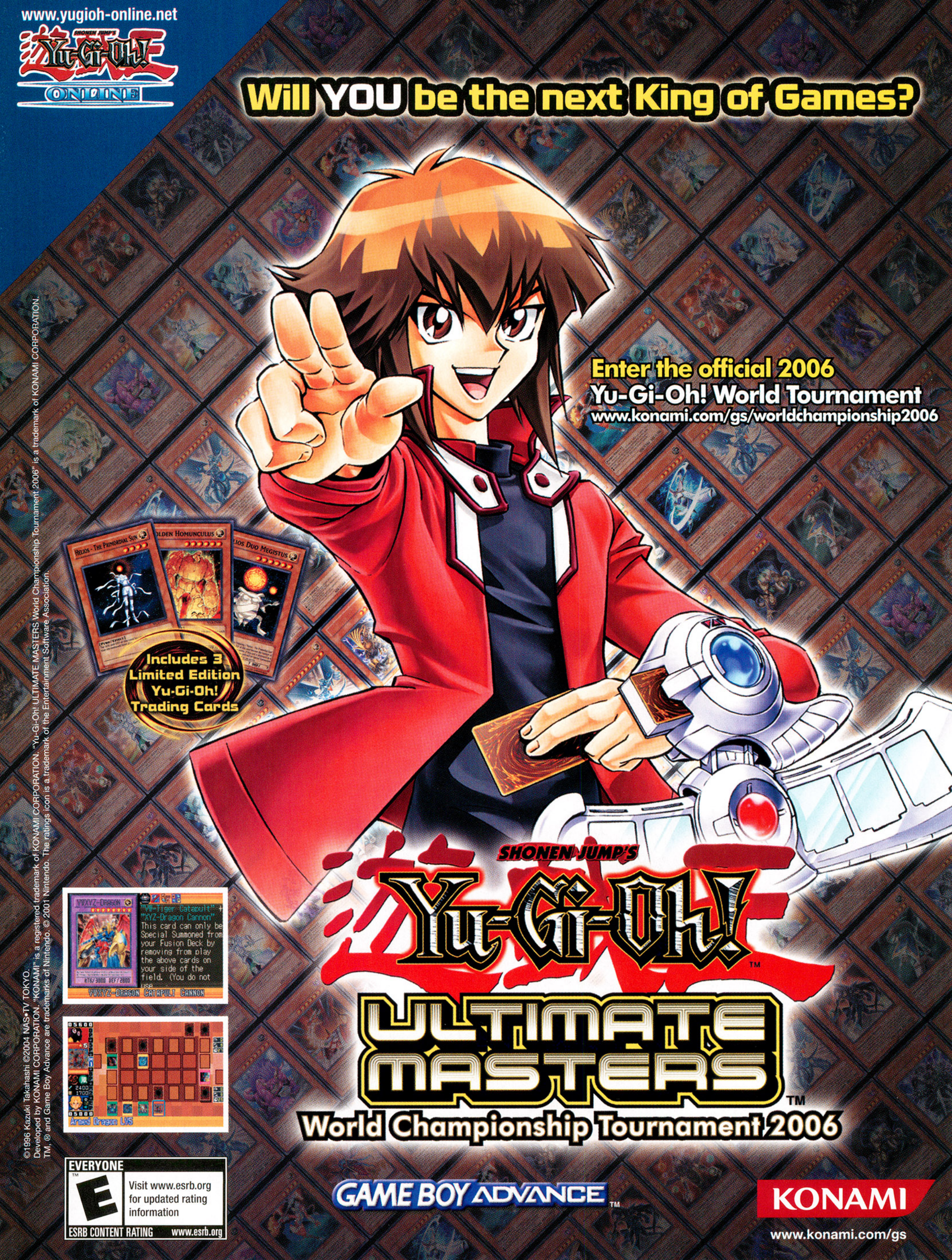
NP'S PICK

Resident Evil 4

READERS' PICK

Resident Evil 4

What else could it be? Resident Evil 4 was not only the greatest game of 2005—it's arguably the best game of this generation. No other title is so absorbing or so densely packed with one amazing set piece after another. The village. El gigante. The mine cart. Chainsaw grandmas. Capcom's survival-horror masterpiece is the blueprint for how to reinvent a franchise. More importantly, it sets a new standard for the entire art form.



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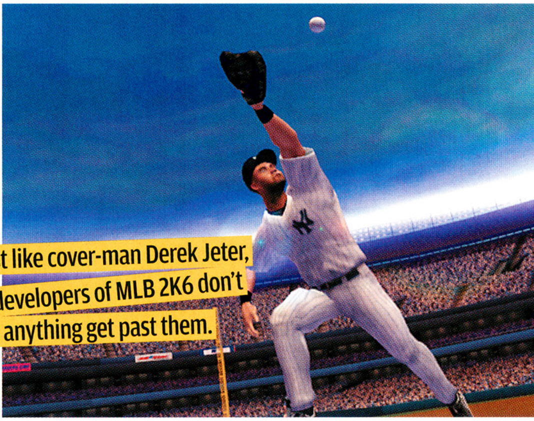
THE ONLY GAME IN TOWN

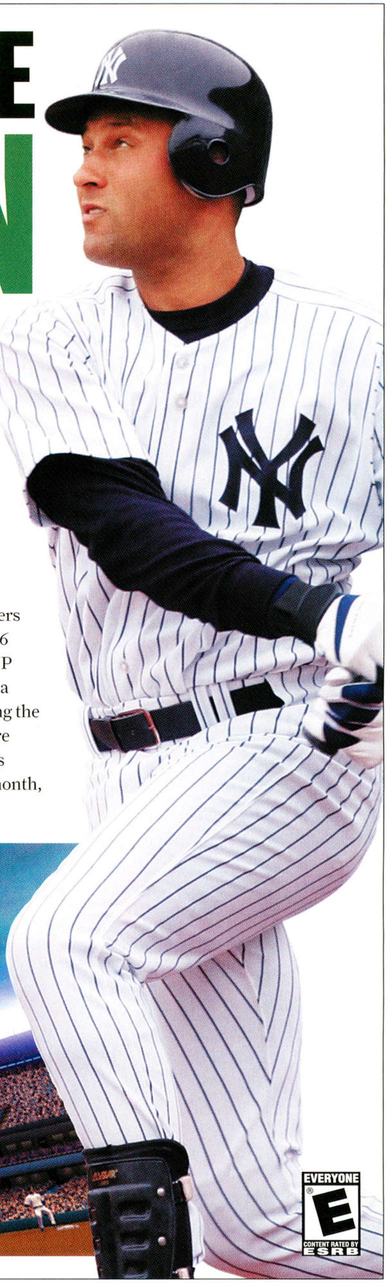
After shutting out EA for the exclusive MLB license, 2K Sports is bringing MLB 2K6 to the GCN. Will it make you forget EA's MVP?

By George Sinfield

If 2K Sports were a baseball team, they'd be the New York Yankees. Like the pros in pinstripes, the company is crushing its competition. By securing rights to deliver the only cross-console MLB title for the foreseeable future, 2K has ensured that baseball fans will notice MLB 2K6, which (fittingly) features Yankees captain Derek Jeter on its cover. With the business deal sealed, developers Kush Games and Visual Concepts have been working to ensure that 2K6 fields a good product. Said 2K Sports project manager Chien Yu in an NP interview, "We felt that 2K5 really nailed the presentation, but came up a little short on gameplay. So this year we came up with a goal of delivering the best-playing baseball game." To accomplish that goal, the developers are taking some gambles on baseball video game standards. Those gambles extend to hitting and pitching, which we introduced last month. This month, we have details on other aspects of the game.



Just like cover-man Derek Jeter, the developers of MLB 2K6 don't let anything get past them.



EVERYONE
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Small Ball

Though Yu insisted that MLB 2K6 will not disappoint casual fans looking for a smooth pick-up-and-play experience, the gameplay nuances seem geared toward baseball enthusiasts interested in realism. It's not easy to catch a fly ball on the run in an MLB stadium, and it's not a walk in the park in 2K6, either. Fielders pick up momentum as they run, and it takes several steps for them to slow down, then time to turn and throw. It's a trick to field as cleanly as Ichiro Suzuki and Jim Edmonds, but success is rewarding.

Batting, too, incorporates momentum. The size of the Batter's Eye, a graphic that allows you to predict the pitch location, is determined by your hitter's recent performance. "Good hitters who are on a hot streak will have a large Batter's Eye, and that will give them a slight boost at the plate," said Yu. "Like anyone, batters who are happy and productive will perform their best."

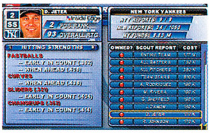
In our last issue we described the Payoff Pitching system, which has you aim at the pitch's breaking point rather than at a point in the strike zone. We've learned that a pitch's break is determined by a pitch-charging mechanic that simulates the pitcher's effort before release. A powered-up pitch has better stuff, but it's more difficult to control. Players may not reach Johan Santana-level perfection at the start, but Yu assured us that "practicing and learning the hard way is a helpful lesson in mixing up pitch selection, and determining effort and location."

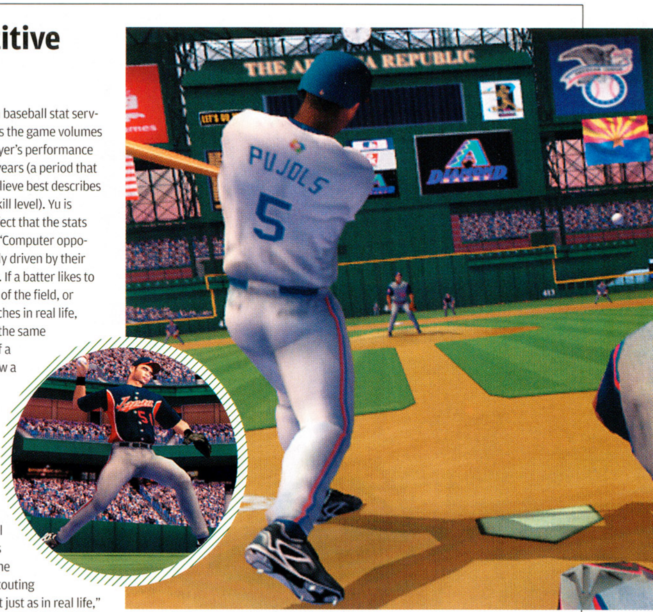
Competitive Edge

A partnership with baseball stat service Inside Edge gives the game volumes of data for each player's performance over the last three years (a period that baseball experts believe best describes a player's current skill level). Yu is pleased with the effect that the stats have on athlete AI. "Computer opponents are completely driven by their Inside Edge reports. If a batter likes to hit to a certain part of the field, or swing at certain pitches in real life, you're going to see the same thing in our game. If a pitcher likes to throw a certain pitch in a particular count in real life, you're also going to see that re-created in our game. The same can be said for fielding, because fielders will position themselves according to what the opposing batter's scouting report suggests. But just as in real life," Yu continued, "there will always be some variance, and players will adjust to you depending on how you play."

Not only does the Inside Edge data help determine the game's outcome, but it gives you insight into how to pitch to and bat against the pros, if you use points to purchase their Inside Edge reports. The reports show hot zones for pitchers, as well as pitch-selection tendencies, and hitting trends for batters.

If you have the report on a batter, your catcher will call for specific pitches and locations in your meetings with the batter. "The ability to call a good pitching game is one aspect that has been sorely missing in any baseball video game, and we've taken the first steps in introducing this unique experience," explained Yu. "You might have a great offensive catcher who hits home runs and racks up RBI, but only does a decent job in calling a game (e.g., Victor Martinez), or you might have a catcher with decent offensive numbers who does an awesome job taking care of his pitchers (e.g., Mike Metheny)."





For single games, Yu suggested that each player will have enough points to buy reports on a handful of opposing athletes. In season play, report purchases are incorporated into team budgets.

People Will Come

For all of its intricate baseball detail, MLB 2K6 has a lot of big-picture features, too, such as the inclusion of the World Baseball Classic, complete with MLB players in the uniforms of their national teams. Franchise and GM Career modes are a step up from those of previous editions, as well, using a player-morale system that tracks clubhouse chemistry. The Virtual Identity Profile (VIP), which has been a part of other 2K Sports titles, will be included in the MLB 2K series for the first time. It tracks the gaming tendencies of your friends, and mimics those moves with AI behavior when your friends are not available. That won't be a problem in the NP office, though, since the sport nuts among us can't wait to get our hands on what could be a groundbreaking baseball title.

Ichiro's return to a Japanese team—the perfect tune-up for another great year with the Mariners—is documented in MLB 2K6's World Baseball Classic mode.

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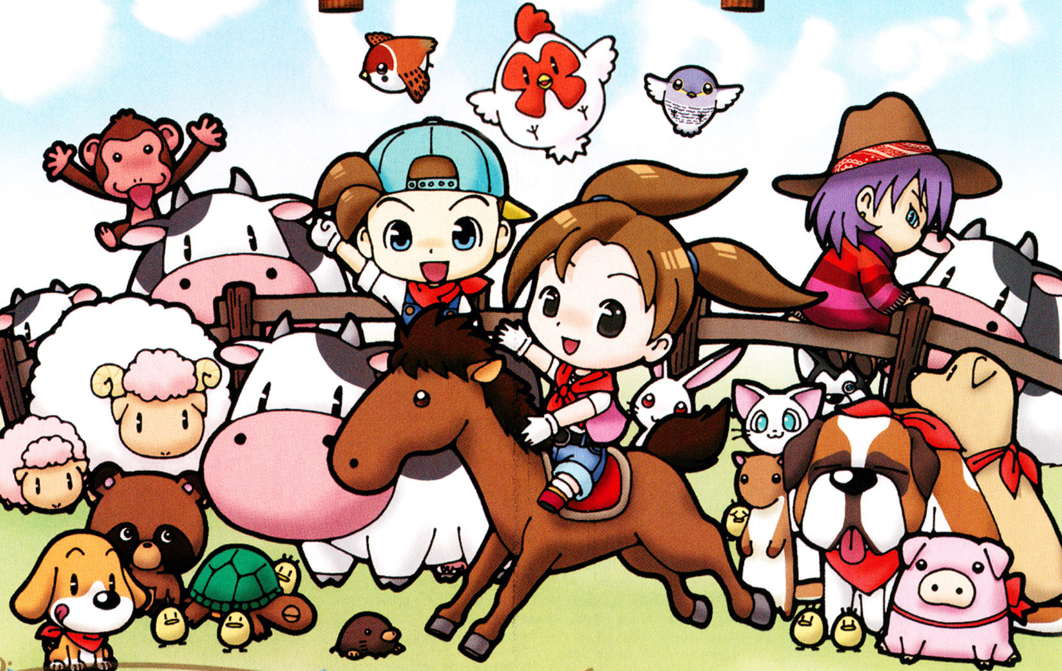

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Ray
I'll replace your
rod with a
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Flying
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Flying

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TARGET: SAMUS ARAN

After years of saving Metroid's lone gunwoman from scrapes with aliens, you can turn the tables in DS multiplayer blast-athon Metroid Prime Hunters. Let us help you hunt your new prey.

By George Sinfield

Shameless Plug for the Player's Guide

Need more prime hunting advice? How about complete maps with item callouts? Check out the official player's guide by visiting www.nintendopower.com/guides/mph.

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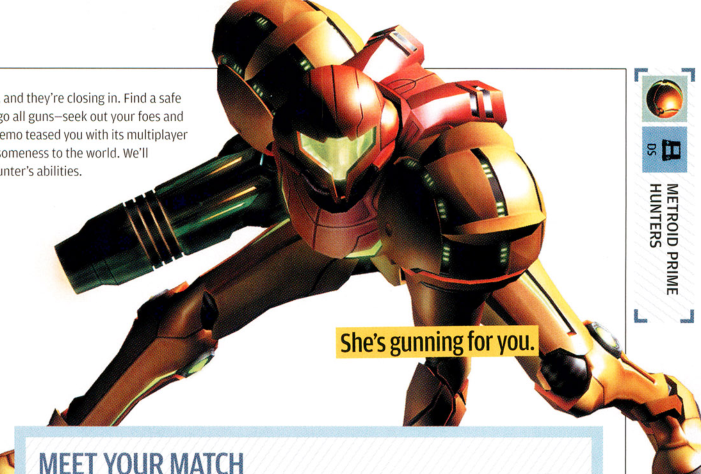
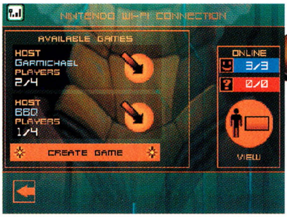
You're not alone. Other hunters are on the prowl, and they're closing in. Find a safe spot and wait for your opportunity to strike, or go all guns—seek out your foes and catch them off guard. Ever since the First Hunt demo teased you with its multiplayer mode, you've been waiting to prove your hunting awesomeness to the world. We'll show you how to connect and make the best of your hunter's abilities.


She's gunning for you.

CREATE A GAME

Local matches require a host: someone to select the arena, mode, and winning conditions. Create a game and invite others to join. Following the fight, participants will be added to each other's friends rosters automatically. Players can also register as friends by exchanging codes. When you create a Friends and Rivals game using a Wi-Fi connection, any of your registered friends or rivals will be able to participate.



HOST
GARMICHAEL
PLAYERS
2/4

HOST
BBQ
PLAYERS
1/4

FIND A GAME

If your established friends and rivals are not available, you can find fellow hunters by way of Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. Select the Find Game option, then set the criteria for a regional (North America) or worldwide search, and select from anyone, or just those who are close to your ranking. Participants will vote on arenas. If the votes are tied, an arena will be selected randomly from the players' choices.

MEET YOUR MATCH

MPH's Wi-Fi features allow hunters worldwide to connect and communicate. Your registered friends are generally people that you know and have met face-to-face. Rivals are players that you've connected with via Wi-Fi matches or Rival Radar.

Friendly Banter

After making a Friends and Rivals Wi-Fi connection, you can communicate with fellow hunters between matches. Press and hold X to speak to registered friends via the mic, or tap out messages on a touch-screen keyboard.

Form Rivalries

With Rival Radar turned on and your DS open or closed, you can exchange licenses with another player who has enabled radar and is within range. Your new contact will appear on your rivals roster.

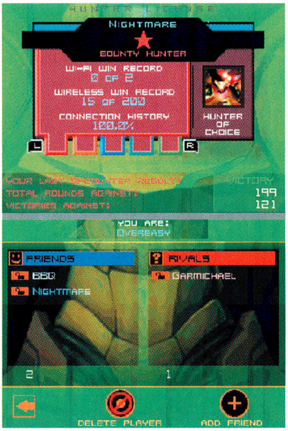
EDIT FRIENDS AND RIVALS

The Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection menu includes an option for editing friends and rivals. Select it to see the names of players with whom you've exchanged information. You can delete names from the rosters or lock them to a roster, ensuring that they won't be deleted when you reach your 60-hunter limit.

The top screen defaults to your Hunter License, displaying detailed information about your multiplayer gaming history. Press L and R to cycle through the stats. If you want to see the license of a friend or rival, and stats that relate to that hunter's matches with you, tap the hunter's name. To go back to your own license, tap your own name, which is displayed above the two lists.

You can put another hunter onto your friends roster by selecting the Add Friend option, then typing in the other player's code as he types in your code. Another way to add a friend is to face off with him in a local match.

Rivals are added during a Rival Radar connection, or after a Find Game Wi-Fi battle (see "Battle Wrap-Up" for details). You can have up to 60 hunters on your friends and rivals rosters, and lock up to 57 of them.



NIGHTMARE
BOUNTY HUNTER

WI-FI WIN RECORD
0 OF 2
WIRELESS WIN RECORD
15 OF 200
CONNECTION HISTORY
100.0%

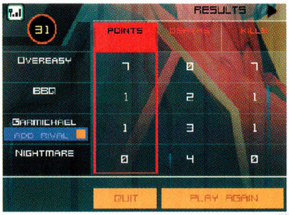
YOUR LAST ENCOUNTER RESULT: VICTORY
TOTAL ROUNDS AGAINST: 199
VICTORIES AGAINST: 121

YOU ARE:
OVEREASY

FRIENDS	RIVALS
BBQ	GARMICHAEL
NIGHTMARE	
2	1

BATTLE WRAP-UP

During the match, you can keep track of your ranking among the participants. Once the dust has settled and a winner has been declared, you can review match stats and cycle through information about the battle and your opponents by tapping arrows on the touch screen.



	POINTS	DEATHS	KILLS
OVEREASY	7	0	7
BBQ	1	2	1
GARMICHAEL ADD RIVAL	1	3	1
NIGHTMARE	0	4	0

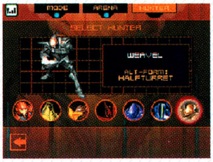
If you meet an opponent in a Wi-Fi random match game and you'd like to be able to fight that person again later, enlist him as a rival by tapping the box next to his name. If he does the same, his name will be added to your rivals roster.

EXPAND YOUR MULTIPLAYER OPTIONS

The list of multiplayer arenas is large from the outset, and will grow considerably as you play both Adventure mode and multiplayer matches. Some arenas unlock when you reach similar locations in the Adventure game, such as the site of the final boss battle, Oubliette. Others unlock after you've played through a set number of multiplayer matches. See the table below for details.

ADD HUNTERS TO YOUR ROSTER

At the beginning of your MPH multiplayer experience, you'll have three hunters to choose from: Samus, Kanden, and Spire. By defeating additional hunters in the adventure or by beating them in multiplayer matches, you'll add them to the list of available fighters.



Unlockable Arenas	Unlocking Conditions	Available Modes						
		BATTLE	SURVIVAL	PRIME HUNTER	CAPTURE	BOUNTY	DEFENDER	NODES
COMBAT HALL	Open from the beginning	X	X	X			X	X
DATA SHRINE	Open from the beginning	X	X	X	X		X	X
PROCESSOR CORE	Open from the beginning	X	X	X			X	X
HIGH GROUND	Open from the beginning	X	X	X				X
ICE HIVE	Open from the beginning	X	X	X	X		X	X
ALINOS PERCH	Open from the beginning	X	X	X	X		X	X
SIC TRANSIT	Open from the beginning	X	X	X	X		X	X
TRANSFER LOCK	Open from the beginning	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
SANCTORUS	Play two multiplayer games	X	X	X			X	X
COMPRESSION CHAMBER	Play four multiplayer games	X	X	X				X
INCUBATION VAULT	Play six multiplayer games	X	X	X				X
SUBTERRANEAN	Play eight multiplayer games	X	X	X			X	X
OUTER REACH	Play 10 multiplayer games	X	X	X	X		X	X
HARVESTER	Play 12 multiplayer games	X	X	X	X		X	X
WEAPONS COMPLEX	Play 14 multiplayer games	X	X	X	X		X	X
COUNCIL CHAMBER	Play 16 multiplayer games	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ELDER PASSAGE	Play 18 multiplayer games	X	X	X	X	X		X
FUEL STACK	Play 20 multiplayer games	X	X	X				X
FAULT LINE	Play 22 multiplayer games	X	X	X	X	X		
STASIS BUNKER	Play a Wi-Fi game or 40 multiplayer games	X	X	X	X		X	X
HEAD SHOT	Play a four-hunter game	X	X	X	X			X
CELESTIAL GATEWAY	Land on Celestial Archives in a single-player adventure	X	X	X			X	X
ALINOS GATEWAY	Land on Alinos in a single-player adventure	X	X	X			X	X
VDO GATEWAY	Land on Vesper Defense Outpost in a single-player adventure	X	X	X	X		X	X
ARCTERRA GATEWAY	Land on Arcterra in a single-player adventure	X	X	X	X		X	X
OUBLIETTE	Complete the single-player adventure	X	X	X			X	X

PICK UP POWER

The multiplayer game has all of the basic power-ups that you'll find in the single-player game (energy, missiles, ammunition) and a handful of exclusive items that will give you a definite battle advantage. The items are sometimes slow to regenerate, so grab them at the beginning of the struggle and control their respawn locations.

Deathalt

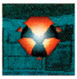
The Deathalt locks your hunter in his alt-form for a short time and makes him deadly to the touch.

Affinity Weapon

Grey weapon power-ups give the hunter his affinity weapon, and give Samus five missiles.

Cloak

You'll be but a shimmering, transparent form to your opponents after you pick up the Cloak item.



Double Damage

True to its name, the Double Damage item doubles your weapon's power temporarily.

AFFINITY BONUS

In addition to the grey affinity-weapon power-ups, which give your hunter his weapon, there are colorized ones that equip you with a specific affinity weapon. If your hunter is associated with the weapon (as Trace is with the Imperialist, for example), he'll gain extra power from the pickup (Trace cloaks when under the influence of his affinity weapon).

MATCH HUNTERS AND MODES

The following section offers strategies for each of the seven modes and the seven hunters, including details on which hunters are suited to particular modes and arenas. All is not equal in the world of Metroid Prime Hunters. You can gain an advantage if you pick hunters, modes, and arenas that fit your fighting style.

Battle/Survival Modes

Battle and Survival modes are all about staying alive while you go after your foes. Keep moving (jump and zigzag while another hunter has you in his sights) and roll into your alt-form to become a smaller target. Also, seek cover and hop onto ledges for protection.

Prime Hunter Mode

The first hunter to score a kill in Prime Hunter mode becomes the prime hunter. When you're it, you'll lose health at a steady rate. But you'll gain a boost in speed, defense, and attack power, and you'll use any affinity weapon to its fullest power. Use the extra juice to defeat enemies and recover your lost health.

RING TIME
0:08 / 1:30
193
58

Defender Mode

If there is more than one hunter fighting over the Defender node at a given time, neither will get credit for occupying the ring. Use the time to stock up on weapons and energy, then target the battling hunters after they've weakened each other.

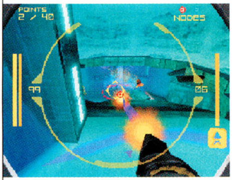
Capture Mode

Observe the area between the bases and try to vary your route from one to the other to keep your enemies guessing. When you have a teammate, figure out a game plan before the match: either stick together or have one partner go after the Octolith while the other one defends the base.

OCTOLITHS
0 / 3
99

Bounty Mode

Bounty mode is similar to Capture mode, but every hunter uses the same Octolith pickup and drop-off points. When you have the Octolith, do what you can to blow past your adversaries. When you don't have it, target only the hunter who has the prize. Your foes should help you defeat him.



POINTS
6 / 40
NODES
159
26

Nodes Mode

When capturing nodes, find two or three that are close together so you can stand on one node while protecting others. Employ concussion weapons to knock other hunters out of nodes, and use your hunter's alt-form to avoid blasts as hunters pursue you.

SAMUS ARAN

SAMUS ARAN

The original space bounty hunter is an all-around strong fighter. If you've played the single-player adventure, you're used to her abilities, giving you a familiarity advantage.

MODE ADVANTAGE:

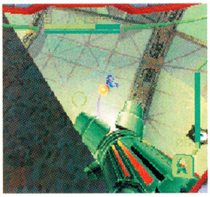
Since Samus is the protohunter, it's fitting that she's a great pick for **Prime Hunter** matches. Her speedy and powerful Morph Ball form and homing missiles help her acquire and keep prime-hunter status. Those same qualities are useful for **Bounty** mode.

ARENA ADVANTAGE:

Samus's long-range attack abilities make her a hunter to be reckoned with in open arenas such as **Outer Reach, Harvester,** and **Alinos Perch.**

Affinity Weapon:
MISSILES

Samus uses missiles more effectively than any other hunter. When charged then released, her missiles curve toward the intended target. Seek out missile ammunition and grey affinity-weapon pickups to increase your missile supply.

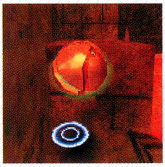


Alt-Form:
MORPH BALL

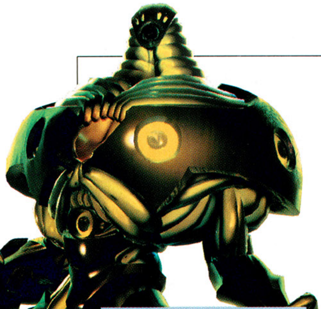
The speedy Morph Ball boosts, damaging any hunter it hits. It also has added mobility—it can go airborne under the power of the Morph Ball Bombs' blasts. Samus can even place bombs in midair. The wide radius of each blast makes bombs great weapons when enemies are coming from all directions.

199 ENERGY
POINTS
0 / 7
BOOST
BOMBS

QUICK TIP



Use Morph Ball Bombs to propel Samus's alt-form to low ledges. The alt-form mobility allows you to keep from exposing your hunter in standard form.



KANDEN

A Frankenstein's monster for the space age, Kanden is the result of an experiment gone wrong. The beast is fast, strong, and able to adjust to his environment quickly.

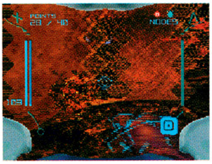
MODE ADVANTAGE:

Kanden is a good selection for **Survival** mode. He can incapacitate attackers temporarily with his charged Volt Driver, and hide from them on ledges in his Stinglarva alt-form. His bombs also give him an advantage in Defender mode.

ARENA ADVANTAGE:

High Ground, **Compression Chamber**, and **Transfer Lock** are a few of the arenas where Kanden can exploit of his ability to hide on ledges. **Harvester** and **Outer Reach** feature places where hunters might fall into the abyss. After scrambling their vision, Kanden can help them on their way.

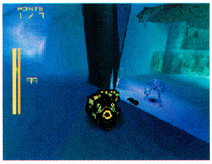
Affinity Weapon: VOLT DRIVER



Though it requires more ammunition than the average affinity weapon, Kanden's Volt Driver packs a huge punch, especially when charged. Charged shots, though slow, have homing ability and a large blast radius, and they scramble the vision of their targets. Standard Volt Driver shots are fast and they fire rapidly.

Alt-Form: STINGLARVA

Like Samus's Morph Ball, the Stinglarva is a fast mover and is easy to maneuver. The alt-form's Larva Bombs seek close enemies, even sliding off ledges to hit unsuspecting hunters below.



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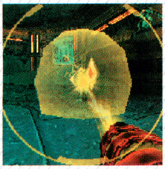


When your opponent's vision is temporarily scrambled after a charged Volt Driver shot, follow up with a rapid-fire set of blasts to continue the assault.

SPIRE

Rock star Spire is one with the magma. He can walk on lava without taking damage, and roll straight up walls in his sticky boulderlike Dialanche alt-form.

MODE ADVANTAGE:

Charged Magmaul shots create big blasts that set their targets on fire, giving Spire the ability to clear out an area in a hurry. Plus, he's great at close combat in his alt-form. Sign him up for **Defender** mode or **Battle** mode.

ARENA ADVANTAGE:

When selecting an arena for Spire, look for one that has lots of walls for him to climb, and limited climbing options for the other hunters, such as **Combat Hall** and **Alinos Perch**. Spire's ultimate arena is **Alinos Gateway**, because of its ground-level lava and a large collection of rock walls.

Affinity Weapon: MAGMAUL

Spire lobs Magmaul projectiles like grenades. They bounce off surfaces, making them deadly in tight spaces, and they create wide explosions. The hunter's affinity for the Magmaul causes the charged shot to detonate even more widely, and set its victims on fire for a short time.

Alt Form: DIALANCHE

A heavy hitter like Spire deserves a bulky alt-form. The Dialanche has the girth to push enemies around (great for Defender and Nodes play) and its Spin Gash is absolutely brutal in contact battle. The Dialanche also climbs straight up walls and has better traction than other alt-forms on slippery surfaces.

QUICK TIP

Spire's ability to resist damage from lava gives him mobility that other hunters lack. Use it to move freely while your prey fights to stay on solid ground.

WEAVEL

Weavel wobbles, but he won't fall down. The cybernetic warrior was injured in a battle versus Samus Aran, and reconstruction has made him more powerful than ever.

MODE ADVANTAGE:

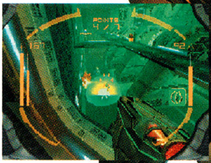
The object of **Nodes** mode is to control multiple node rings at a time. The fact that Weavel can split into two forms—the auto-firing Halfturret and a lunging other half—gives him the multitasking advantage.

ARENA ADVANTAGE:

Both Weavel's Halfturret and his Battlehammer give him an advantage in crowded areas. Select him for arenas that have bottlenecks or power-ups that every hunter will gravitate to, such as **Processor Core**, **Transfer Lock**, and **Sanctorus**.

Affinity Weapon: BATTLEHAMMER

Like the Magmaul, the Battlehammer is a lobbing weapon, but its shots don't bounce. When the weapon is in Weavel's hands, the projectiles create wide explosions on impact and cause a large amount of damage. Unlike some affinity weapons, the Battlehammer does not become more powerful by charging up.

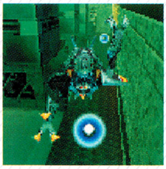


Alt Form: HALFTURRET

When Weavel goes into his alt-form, he splits into a static Halfturret (which fires on all enemies within range automatically) and a player-controlled other half (which uses a lunging attack). The split allows Weavel to protect busy areas with the turret while he explores his surroundings with his other half.

NODES
POINTS
5 / 40
TURRET ENERGY: 99

QUICK TIP



The Halfturret could lose energy at a good clip in hotly contested areas. While it's fending off enemies, use Weavel's other half to find ammo and energy.

NOXUS

Cold-blooded killer Noxus is a Vhozon with an intimidating frame and enemy-freezing abilities. When his victims are on the run, Noxus has a way of keeping them in his clutches long enough to finish them off.

MODE ADVANTAGE:

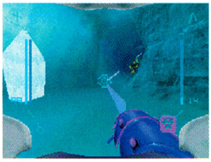
When every hunter is after a single item, it pays to be able to freeze your opponents in their tracks. It's that ability that makes Noxus a great choice for a **Bounty** match or for **Prime Hunter** mode.

ARENA ADVANTAGE:

Wide hallways, such as those in **Sic Transit**, are perfect for the Vhoscythe and its spinning attack. Since Noxus can freeze foes then knock them off ledges, **Weapons Complex** and **Head Shot** are also good choices.

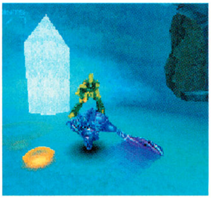
Affinity Weapon: JUDICATOR

The Judicator's standard shots bounce off surfaces, allowing you to hit enemies with ricochet shots around corners. When most other hunters use a charged-up Judicator, the weapon fires three projectiles simultaneously. In Noxus's hands, the charged blast creates a wave of energy that freezes foes.



Alt Form: VHOSCYTHE

Noxus's spinning-top alt-form is not easy to control, and its Ice Stab attack takes more than a second to warm up and start swinging, but it causes a lot of damage when it hits. Use it in tight areas where your foes have nowhere to run.



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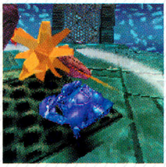


After the Vhoscythe's blade slices into its target, it retracts automatically. Press and hold the fire button to make it swing out again.

TRACE

The sniper, Trace, is often unseen and is deadly from long distances. Other hunters will never be at ease when they know the silent killer is on the prowl.

MODE ADVANTAGE:

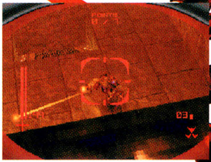
Trace is a great pick for **Battle** mode and **Capture** mode. His Imperialist allows him to defeat enemies from a long distance, and his Triskelion is vicious from close range, making him an all-around hunter-defeating machine.

ARENA ADVANTAGE:

Arenas that have elevated perches that look out over open areas are perfect for Trace's sniping abilities. They include **High Ground**, **Elder Passage**, **Alinos Perch**, and **Alinos Gateway**.

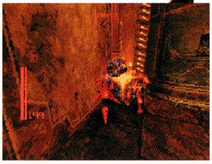
Affinity Weapon:
IMPERIALIST

A straight shooter, the Imperialist is accurate and deadly, though it doesn't have charged power. Any hunter carrying the Imperialist can zoom in on his target for a head shot. When Trace has the weapon and is stationary, he disappears in front of his enemies' eyes.

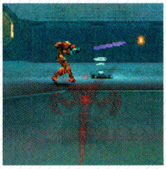


Alt Form:
TRISKELION

Trace's Triskelion alt-form moves and strafes like the standard form of any hunter. Its long, lunging attack is quick and painful for the target, but it's not a good choice for Nodes or Defender play, as the Triskelion will often end up leaping out of the ring.



QUICK TIP



The Triskelion has cloaking power, and the Imperialist gives Trace's standard form the ability to disappear. Use his invisibility to surprise your adversaries.

SYLUX

Second only to Samus for the honor of all-around bounty hunter, Sylux is a versatile and resourceful fighter with accurate shots and an explosive alt-form attack.

MODE ADVANTAGE:

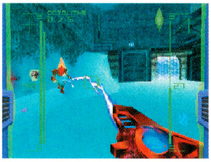
The Shock Coil can sap energy from Sylux's enemies and add to the hunter's own energy reserves, making Sylux a great hunter for **Capture** mode, which involves a lot of chasing and being chased, and **Survival** mode. A hunter under attack from the Shock Coil may roll into alt-form to become a smaller target. If he does so, he'll drop the Octolith.

ARENA ADVANTAGE:

The Shock Coil gives Sylux an advantage in open arenas, such as **Stasis Bunker**, **Data Shrine**, and **Celestial Gateway**. The electrically charged hunter can hit enemies without aiming at them, and hold onto them when they have nowhere to hide.

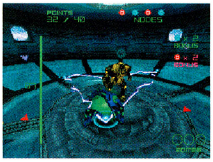
Affinity Weapon:
SHOCK COIL

The Shock Coil sends out an electric arc that hits any hunter within its short range. Hold the fire button to sustain your attack. The longer you hold it, the more powerful it will be. The continuous blast is much more conservative with your ammo supply than most affinity weapons. When Sylux is using the Shock Coil, the hunter actually regains energy as the target loses it.

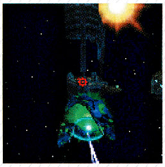


Alt Form:
LOCKJAW

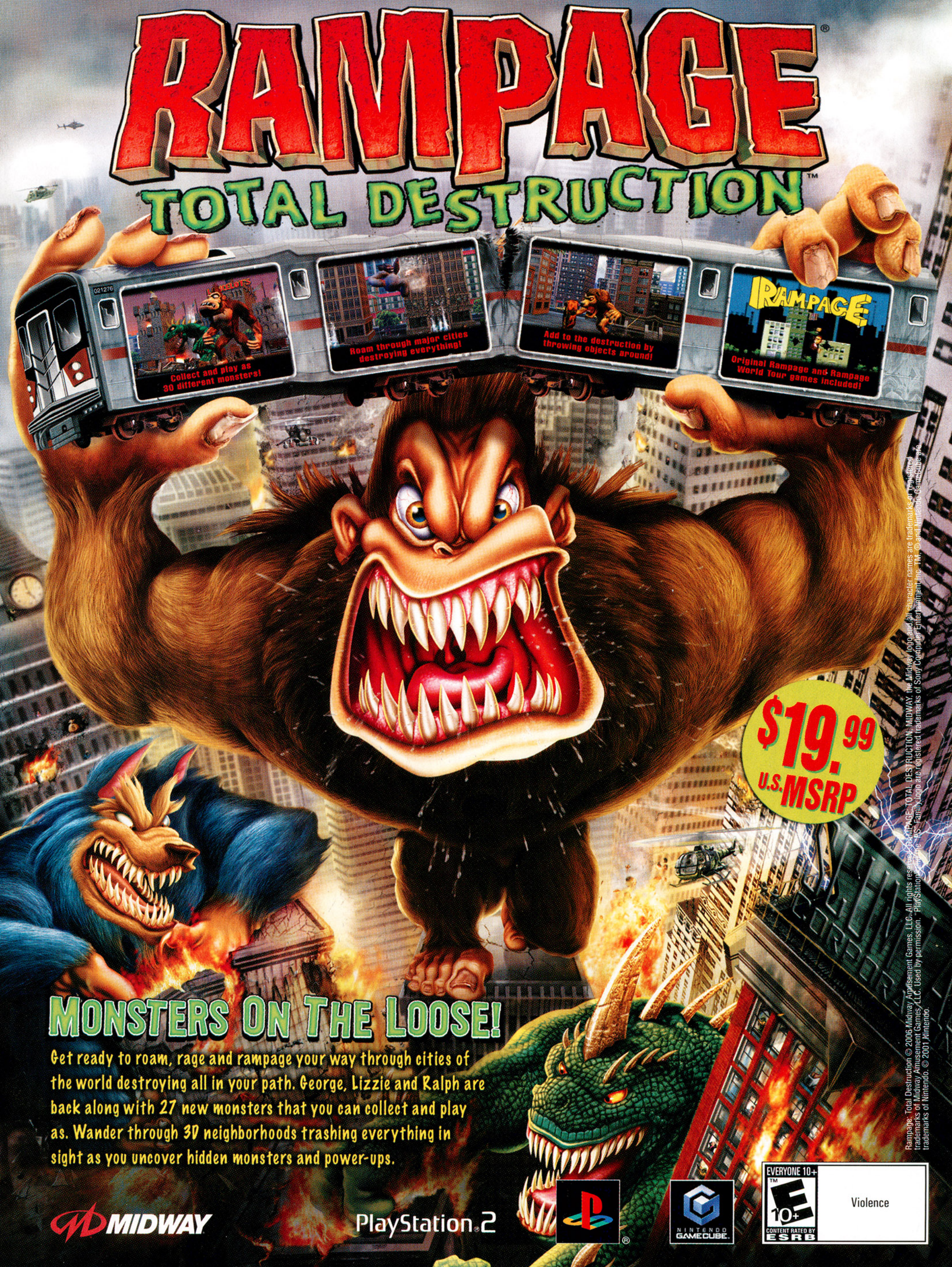
Sylux's speedy Lockjaw is a floating tank that hovers slightly above the ground and doesn't slow down while going uphill, allowing it to cross small gaps. The alt-form's bombs propel it into the air, similar to the way that Samus's bombs make the Morph Ball hop. The first two bombs that the Lockjaw drops create an electric trip wire between them. Placing the third one detonates all three bombs. If an enemy is caught in the explosive triangle, major damage will result.



QUICK TIP



In arenas that have low gravity, such as Head Shot and Transfer Lock, Sylux is able to travel long distances in the air in alt-form. Release three bombs quickly while you're on the move. The third explosion will send the Lockjaw flying over any wide gap.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Classified Info

Nobody likes a cheater. Except us.

Whip the White Witch

>THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

The Pevensie children must defeat an entire army to free the land of Narnia, but with these codes, they'll be more than up to the challenge. Whether you're playing the GCN, DS, or GBA version of the game, you'll have no trouble ending the hundred-year winter and dethroning the White Witch.

>GCN VERSION

For all but the level-unlock and level-skip codes, you must enter the master code before the cheat will work. After you enter any code that requires the master code, the words "Cheat Activated" will appear.

Master code:

At the title screen, hold L and R and press down, down, right, up on the Control Pad. The "Please Press Start to Begin" text will turn green to indicate that you've entered the code properly.

10,000 coins:

While playing the game, hold the L Button, then press down, left, right, down, down on the Control Pad.

Invincibility:

While playing the game, hold the L Button, then press down, up, down, right, right on the Control Pad.

Fill combo meter:

While playing the game, hold the L Button, then press up, up, right, up on the Control Pad.

Restore all children's health:

While playing the game, hold the L Button, then press down, left, left, right on the Control Pad.

All abilities become available:

While playing the game, hold the L Button, then press down, left, right, left, up. The words "Ability Unlocked" will appear. Enter the inventory to purchase the new abilities.

Complete current level:

To finish the level you're currently on, hold L and press down, left, down, left, down, right, down, right, up on the Control Pad.

Unlock all levels:

While in the level-select screen (available after you complete the first level), hold the L Button and press up, up, right, right, up, right, down on the Control Pad.

Unlock all bonus levels:

While on the Bonus drawer at the bottom of the level-select screen, hold L and press down, down, right, right, down, right, up.

>DS VERSION

Enter these codes at the title screen prior to starting or continuing a game. When you enter a code correctly, a sound will confirm that it's been accepted.

Invincibility:

A Y X B ↑ ↑ ↓ ↓

Auto-restoring health:

← → ↑ ↓ A A A A

Devastating attacks:

A ↑ B ↓ X X Y Y

Acquire armor:

A X Y B ↑ ↑ ↑ ↓

Acquire blessed (stronger) weapons:

← ↑ A B → ↓ X Y

Acquire max currency:

↑ X ↑ X ↓ B ↓ B

Acquire max statistics:

← B ↑ Y ↓ X → A

>GBA VERSION

The level-select code must be entered at the chapter-select menu when you continue a saved game. To use the other cheats, simply pause the game and enter the desired code.

Chapter select:
R, L, up, up, left, right

Invincibility:
Right, L, down, A, left, Select

Acquire armor (available only for Winter maps):
A, Select, left, down, right, up

Restore health:
Select, R, A, L, left, right

Turn cold system on/off:
Right, left, left, down, up, Select

One-hit kills:
Up, down, Select, Select, down, up

Inventory cheat (receive five of each consumable):
Left, A, left, Select, down, down

Adjust snow effect:
A, L, Select, R, right, right

Toggle ice effect on and off (doesn't work in all areas):
A, L, Select, A, right, up

Do the Robot

>SONIC GEMS COLLECTION

Last month we delivered a treasure trove of codes for the blue hedgehog in Sonic Gems Collection. This month we've got the goods on the title's two unlockable Vectorman games.

Vectorman

Stage select & advanced options:

Enter Vectorman's options menu and press B, A, A, B, down, B, A, A, B. You'll enter a second options menu, where you can select your level, amount of health, number of lives, and special weapon.

Refill life meter:

Pause the game and press B, A, right, B, X, B, down, B, A, right, B, Start.

Slow motion when damaged:

Pause the game and press down, right, B, X, up, left, B, Start.

Free movement:

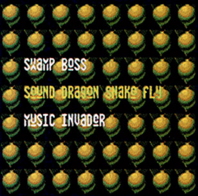
Pause the game and enter X, B, left, left, B, X, B, A, Start. Vectorman will turn into an arrow and you'll be able to move freely around the level. Pause the game and enter the code again to return to normal.

Vectorman 2

After starting the game, pause and input the desired codes.

Level select/sound test:

Up, right, B, A, B, down, left, B, down, Start



Refill life meter:

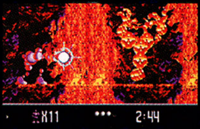
A, B, A, B, left, up, up, Start

Change special weapon:

X, B, left, left, down, B, down, Start

Gain an extra life:

Right, up, A, B, down, up, A, down, up, A, Start



Display map coordinates type A:

A, B, left, left, Start

Display map coordinates type B:

A, B, left, down, Start

Display map coordinates type C:

Left, up, B, up, Start

Two More for Tony

>TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN WASTELAND

The codes for Tony Hawk's American Wasteland continue to trickle in. To add these cheats to your repertoire, go to the Options menu and input the codes at the Cheat Codes screen; note that they're case-sensitive. After you start playing the game, pause and select Game Options from the pause menu. Choose Cheats and turn on the codes you wish to use.

uronfire
Special meter always full

SCORE: 15799
1:33
1,750 X 1
GAZELLE UNDERFLIP

2themOOn
Extremely low gravity

Open Warfare

>SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR

At the main menu, highlight Extras and, using either the Control Pad or the Control Stick, press left 11 times, right seven times, then the Y Button once. A noise will confirm correct code entry, and you'll be able to select any level from the Single Mission Replay menu.

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SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP

Travel to Nintendo, where the design gurus behind Volume 201's Water World makeover will give *your* Animal Crossing: Wild World village a whole new look!

I see neon-lit roads in this town's future. And let's get a mansion in here. Then we'll have room for. . . .
These cherry trees have got to go. All of them!
Oliver
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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PLAYER'S POLL SWEEPSTAKES
May 2006, Volume 203

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A. How old are you?
1. Under 6 **2.** 6-9 **3.** 10-12
4. 13-16 **5.** 17-24 **6.** 25 or older

B. Sex
1. Male **2.** Female

C. Which of the following statements best describes your feelings about this month's New Super Mario Bros. feature or coverage?
1. I learned a lot about the game from the article, and I can't wait to buy it.
2. I liked the article, but I still want to know more about the game before I buy it.
3. The article was fine, but I'm not interested in playing New Super Mario Bros.
4. I didn't read the article, but I'm planning to later.
5. I have no interest in New Super Mario Bros.

D. Which of the following statements most closely reflects your feelings about this month's Metroid Prime Hunters strategy article?
1. I liked the article. The strategies will help me get through the game.
2. I don't have the game yet, but after reading the article I plan to buy it.
3. I liked the article, but I don't plan on buying the game.
4. I didn't like the article, but I own or will own the game.
5. I didn't like the article, and I don't plan on buying the game.
6. I didn't read the article.

E. Do you own Nintendo DS?
1. Yes
2. No, but I intend to buy a DS
3. No, I have no intention of buying a DS

F. Do you intend to buy Nintendo Revolution?
1. Yes, absolutely
2. Probably, but I need to know more about it
3. Probably not, but I want to learn more about it
4. Definitely not

G. How satisfied are you with this issue?
1. Very satisfied **2.** Somewhat satisfied
3. Somewhat dissatisfied **4.** Very dissatisfied

H. Do you plan to renew your subscription to Nintendo Power?
1. Yes **2.** No
3. Undecided **4.** I don't subscribe, but I plan to do so.
5. I don't subscribe, and I don't plan to do so.

I. Would you recommend Nintendo Power to others?
1. Yes **2.** No

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MAY 2006

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50 Winners

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INSIDE ZELDA

NINTENDO POWER'S MONTHLY CHECK-IN FROM THE ZELDA DEVELOPMENT TEAM.

(Part 12)

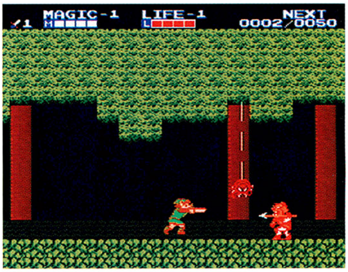
THE ROLE OF THE SIDEKICK

MAKOTO MIYANAGA | **NINTENDO** | **KYOTO**

Inside Zelda began with a look at the visions of Twilight Princess director Eiji Aonuma. Since then, IZ has visited many members of the Twilight Princess development team who have to ensure that their piece of the grand puzzle stays true to Aonuma's vision. It takes a strong leader like Aonuma to keep so many creative minds on the same page—but it also takes a great support person. Makoto Miyanaga is the one tasked with the endlessly busy job of ensuring that all of Aonuma's decisions are carried out by all the teams working on Twilight Princess. Given the enormous size of the game and its vast development crew, Miyanaga must put on more miles walking the halls of Nintendo's headquarters than anyone else. With little time left until E3 2006, we went to Aonuma's go-to man to find out the status of the game—how's Twilight Princess looking?

Staying in Synch

Any time of year is a busy time for me as an assistant director. But as anyone in game development can tell you, there's no busier time than in the lead-up to E3. As Mr. Aonuma's assistant director, I do everything I can to guarantee that his directions are fully realized among the whole team, executed correctly in each section, and that the entire development is staying on the right track. At the moment, I'd say that development is at the point where the game's outline is very close to being nailed down. The main flow of the game is getting a few tweaks, and changes are being made to some of the many branching storylines that always make up a Zelda adventure.

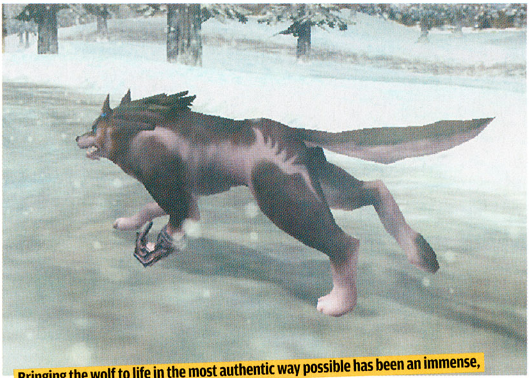


Realistic action in Zelda II? Miyanaga says that when he was young, the game gripped him like no other.

You've heard from many people on the team that we're under great expectations to exceed Ocarina of Time. I see Twilight Princess's development from a privileged perspective, since I work with many teams almost every day. So I'm in a unique position to see how the pressure from Ocarina translates for different people: sometimes good, sometimes not so good. For example, there's a feeling that we absolutely can't "lose" to Ocarina. And that creates a lot of pressure. As we proceed, we're seeing unbelievable things being created for Twilight Princess with lavish attention to detail.

Sometimes I wonder, when I encounter one of the many spectacular creations that I seem to be bumping into more and more lately, did we really need to go to such lengths to provide the extraordinary detail? As someone who was involved with Ocarina development as a field designer, I remember the equally strong passion for creating something new and unprecedented—the same spirit that the Zelda team is feeling now.

In more-recent Inside Zeldas, you've already been hearing how important a



Bringing the wolf to life in the most authentic way possible has been an immense, new challenge for the Zelda team. You'll be delighted to hear the status. . . .

As Mr. Aonuma's assistant director, I do everything I can to guarantee that his directions are fully realized among the whole team.

Eiji Aonuma

Keeping everyone you've met in Inside Zelda—and more!—on the same page doesn't leave a guy much time to eat!

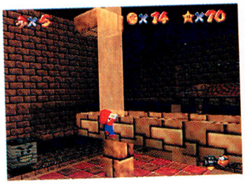
visual sense of touchability has become among our designers and programmers. Natural, comfortable play control—that, too, has become all-important for the new Zelda game. Also, you've heard many people mention how realism isn't actually our first priority. Stunning graphics and character motion are. (All that being said, I'm often struck at the shocking level of detail, as I've said, and Twilight Princess far surpasses previous Zelda titles like Ocarina. But I digress.) As assistant director, it's been nice to see them echo these same thoughts, since they're a core part of Mr. Aonuma's vision for Twilight Princess, and it means that everyone is indeed on the same page. That's especially important when breaking fresh ground in game development. For instance, bringing the playable wolf to life in the most authentic way possible has been an immense, new challenge for the Zelda team. You'll be delighted to hear the status: We've got the wolf moving around quite naturally in gameplay, and the player's feeling of moving as the wolf is incredibly natural. Just a little fine-tuning, and the wolf will be ready for playable prime time at E3.

Groundwork with Nintendo

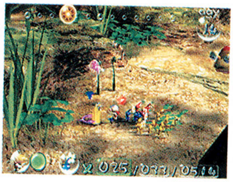
I've been a huge video game fan since my days in elementary school. Not just on the Famicom system (NES to you) but very much on the early personal computers, too; it's there that I could create my own fun, simple programs when I was a kid. I have especially vivid memories about Zelda II: The Adventure of Link, however, since it came out around the time that I was studying hard for my high-school entrance exam. The moment that I finished that tough exam, I ran all the way to the store to buy Zelda II. And it was worth the wait: The Zelda II experience was sensational. Back then, the action scenes were incredibly realistic for me, and I was completely absorbed.

My interest in games continued all the way through my university days, of course, when I studied commercial visual design. But it never seriously occurred to me that I could work in video games until my graduation date approached and I had to think about my future career. Many of my friends were taking their design skills to advertising agencies, but I wanted to use my talents at a company that made products of some sort. So I applied for a position at Nintendo. For my job interview, I showed some of my work: a card game that I'd designed, plus an original backpack design—maybe not the typical calling cards that people use to break into the video game industry!

My first position with Nintendo was working as an assistant debugger, and I quickly learned that the idea of personal time flies right out the window when you work in the game industry: no long summer vacations, and weekends off? Forget about it! Then the first time I worked on actual game development was on Super Mario 64, where I joined the project when it was already well under way, and I designed the inside of the pyramid, plus Peach's secret slide. Field design is all about creating a place where the gamer can play around, where the player can directly interact with the environment. It's important design work, and I was glad to work on several other titles after Super Mario 64 in the same capacity. Interestingly enough, I was always called into projects also well under way, where the team needed extra help.



Miyanaga's first work with field design at Nintendo was on Super Mario 64, where he slaved away on the details of the pyramid.



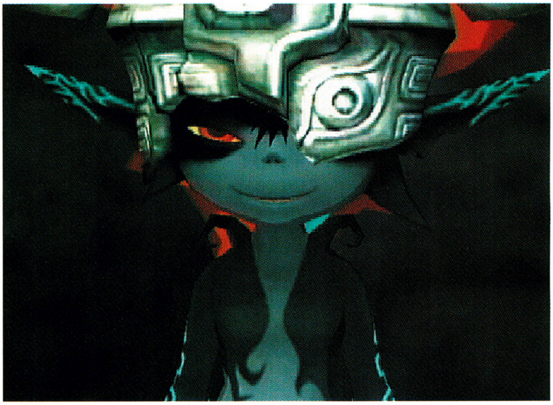
He was brought in much earlier on the first Pikmin game, where he helped lay the groundwork for what the landscapes would look like.

> **Development is about to reach an even more fevered pitch, and I'll have my head in Twilight Princess 24/7 . . .**

Seeing the Big Picture

But Pikmin was the exception. I participated almost from the very beginning of development. Like many Nintendo games, and many Zelda games, Pikmin followed the Nintendo philosophy of "miniature garden" design, where the player plays in an evocative, well-defined environment, then discovers that some small bit of what you can see in that area is actually part of a wholly separate area. Piece by piece, it all adds up over time into a vaster world of discovery. Pikmin was my first game where I learned to see game development from this perspective—a mind-expanding project for me. But Pikmin was also interesting to work on from a technical perspective: We took photos of real things, then translated those images into graphic polygons. Fascinating process. But of the many games that I've worked on, Ocarina of Time still occupies a cherished part of my memories. As I worked on its field design for Hyrule, there were a huge number of challenges and concepts that we'd never seen before in game development. Even now, I'm still astonished that we tackled so many of those ideas and pulled them off. Since Ocarina, however, I've tended to get involved with more and more discussions of the "bigger picture" of each game and done less actual design work. Which led to working with Mr. Aonuma to oversee the entirety of Twilight Princess, which is a very high-pressure responsibility. But I'm very lucky to have the chance to work with Mr. Aonuma on this game.

In Twilight Princess, we're taking up many challenges that we could never have done in Ocarina. Therefore, many people are intensely thinking about how this new "miniature garden" comes together—somewhat of an ironic term, given how huge Twilight Princess is. We never exactly had a crystal-clear image when we started to create its landscape, just a general notion of its structure. And as we've had many discussions over many months, that blueprint has kept evolving. I think of it as sculpting in clay. For example, though I can't go into specific details yet, the phrase "Other World" has been a key concept for us as we've proceeded, and as we've dwelled on the meaning of "Other World," we continue to realize that it's still too early to finish sculpting. Many ideas can still be absorbed into the final work. We've shown so little of that "Other World," but you have seen the new character Midna. I like Midna a lot, because that character shows a wide variety of emotional expression and has a lot of depth. I'm also seeing how Link has grown into his most human depiction yet seen in a Zelda game, with moves and expressiveness that stay in step with what the player is feeling in a variety of scenes.



Miyanaga loves the emotional depth and range behind Twilight Princess's mysterious new character Midna. Of course, he would. He's watched Midna grow up a lot since last year's E3.

Miyanaga probably sees his daughter's drawings more than his daughter—that's how busy he is with Twilight Princess!

Life? What Life?

Development is about to reach an even more fevered pitch, and I'll have my head in Twilight Princess 24/7, so I'm trying to squeeze in an off day here and there before that happens. There's just no time to pursue my personal interests—and I rarely even have any time for my family! Sure, I have a lot of guilt about not spending more time with my six-year-old daughter, since when I am home, I'm probably soaking up just enough sleep before I head back into work. But that's the game-development lifestyle, especially on a project as important as Twilight Princess. For now, it's my whole life. Actually, on the rare occasion that I can get away to a movie or watch some TV, I find it difficult to simply relax and enjoy it. I've always got my "creator hat" on and am always picking apart how the shows and movies are made.

Everyone on the development team knows how much you're looking forward to Twilight Princess. We're working extremely hard to ensure that it'll deliver a level of excitement far beyond what you've ever seen in a Zelda game. Not just for all you longtime Zelda fans out there, but also for all the newcomers that—I promise—are going to want to experience what we've been dreaming up. Heard those sentiments before in Inside Zelda? Great—then I've been doing my job. It's a point that Mr. Aonuma drives home all the time, and I've ensured that the message stays loud and clear around the whole development team: Twilight Princess will be a game that *everyone* will want to play.

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THE GOOD LIFE

Days on the farm are anything but ordinary in **Harvest Moon: Magical Melody** for Nintendo GameCube.

By Chris Shepperd & Andy Myers

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

New to town, eh? Well then, welcome to Flower Bud Village. This place has it all—lush soil, beautiful scenery, and great hospitality. To help you get the most out of your stay, we've put together a little travel guide for you. Andy's slightly more old-school—a stay-at-home type who lives off the fat of the land. Chris likes to enjoy everything else the town has to offer. In addition to your farming duties, all along your journey, you'll earn notes for accomplishing milestones—collect them all to help the save the Harvest Goddess, overseer of the village. No matter what lifestyle you choose—and how hard you work to save the Goddess—you'll never run out of fun things to do!

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SOCIALITE CHRIS

The spacious, fertile land in and around Flower Bud Village is ideal for starting a farm, but that doesn't mean you're required to get your hands grimy playing in the dirt. Instead, you can spend your days living the life of Riley—hanging out with the neighbors and going fishin'. You might not have the cash of a full-time farmer, but friendship is more important than all the money in the world.

FARM BOY ANDY

Back in my day, we didn't run around town socializing, trying to make money this way and that! We earned an honest living at home, on the farm! Sure a farmer's life can be lonely at first, but it's also incredibly challenging and highly rewarding. With a few guidelines and simple common sense, you'll be bringing home the bacon in no time.

WHERE SHOULD I LIVE?

THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

When you first move to Flower Bud Village, you'll have the choice of three properties on which you can establish your farm. They each have their advantages and disadvantages. For someone who plans to enjoy all of the offerings of the town and doesn't expect to spend much time at home, the northeast plot is the best location. It offers close proximity to the mines, the townsfolk, and the ocean. It's not much land, but you won't be there very often anyway.

Go ahead.

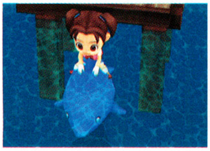
DOWN BY THE RIVER

Of the three starter properties you'll be offered near the beginning of the game, the riverside property is the clear choice for serious farmers. The land around it is highly fertile, and there's just enough room to start raising livestock. Also, being near the river will allow you to fish for food without straying far from home. But your starter property is just the beginning—as a farmer, you'll need all the land you can get. Make friends with Theodore, the mayor, to unlock future properties for purchase at the workshop.

HOW DO I EARN MONEY?

NO MONEY, NO PROBLEM

Living the life of a social butterfly, it's hard to break away and earn a little dough, so you have to maximize your work periods. Mining ore and precious gems is the fastest way to turn a buck. You can make money fishing, but you have to know the best angling spots to make it worth your while. You can carry only as many goods as your rucksack will hold, and when you begin the game, it's pretty small. Upgrade your rucksack to a larger size as soon as possible to save time going between distant destinations.



Stop by the ocean dock and feed the dolphin every day. He'll eventually offer to take you to the island, a fisherman's paradise.

Lake Cave Sublevel 21

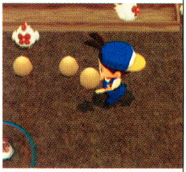
In the wintertime, Sunny Lake will freeze over, allowing you to enter the Lake Cave. The gems buried in its depths are extremely valuable.

	Name	Selling Price
GEMS	Diamond	500G
	Emerald	330G
	Ruby	350G
	Sapphire	250G

	Name	Selling Price
ORE	Copper	50G
	Gold	150G
	Rare Ore	200G
	Silver	100G

SLOW AND STEADY WINS

As a farmer, making money requires planning, diligence, and patience. Your main source of income will be crops and animals. Determine in advance which crops you will plant each season. Seeds with the ability to regrow after each harvest will prove to be particularly economical. When the money starts rolling in, put it toward a barn, a chicken coop, and some animals.



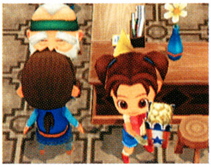
	Name	Season	Harvests	Selling Price
CROPS	Breadfruit	Spring	Multiple	300G
	Cabbage	Spring	Single	340G
	Potato	Spring	Single	100G
	Turnip	Spring	Single	180G
	Cocoa	Summer	Multiple	70G
	Corn	Summer	Multiple	150G
	Onion	Summer	Single	90G
	Tomato	Summer	Multiple	150G
	Bell Pepper	Fall	Multiple	160G
	Carrot	Fall	Single	110G
	Eggplant	Fall	Multiple	160G
	Pumpkin	Fall	Single	120G
	Spinach	Fall	Single	130G
	Yam	Fall	Multiple	180G

HOW CAN I STAY STRONG?

Get out and enjoy the world! Every night a new dish, and a new friend to eat with!

TRY THE SOUP—IT'S DELISH

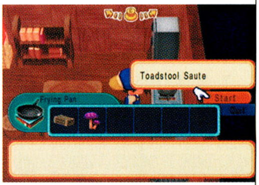
There's nothing like a good night's sleep to boost your energy to its max, but often you'll need a quick midday pick-me-up to finish your daily chores. The ranch is a wonderful place to practice your culinary arts, but if you don't spend a lot of time growing your own crops and you have to buy all the ingredients from the store, you're probably wasting your time. Instead, head over to one of the restaurants around town and sample their delicious fare. Doing so is quick and cheap, and you'll often bump into your neighbors. The downside is that you have to eat whatever food you buy right away.



Ain't nothin' like some good old-fashioned home cookin'!

RECIPES FOR SUCCESS

Cooking at home will play a major role in your life on the farm. Upgrade your refrigerator as early as possible at the workshop, and stock it full of crops and other found foods. There are 189 dishes that can be created from different food combinations. The more complex the dish, the more stamina it will restore so you can get back to farm work. And making harder-to-cook dishes (such as Spicy Stew or Seafood Pizza) and selling them can bring in extra money.



HOW DO I SPEND MY FREE TIME?

THE GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

Gifts grease the wheels of your friendships with townsfolk, but they can be pricey; a lot of the items you would ordinarily sell, you'll have to give as presents. It'll all come back in the end, however—the better friends you are with someone, the more likely that person will show up on your doorstep with a gift for your very own.

FESTIVAL NETWORKING

The Flower Bud Village calendar is chock-full of events for you to attend. They're great places to glad-hand the residents, as well as earn prizes in various contests. For some festivals to occur, you'll have to contribute something—for example, if you want the Pumpkin Festival to happen, you'll have to donate a pumpkin in the town-square bin before the day of the event.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

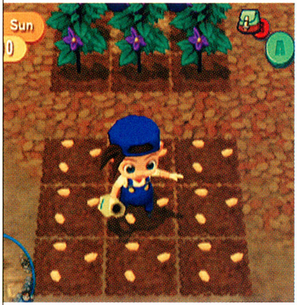
Season	Day	Festival	Location
Spring	01	New Year's Day	Flower Bud Square
Spring	08	Egg Festival	Flower Bud Square
Spring	17	Spring Horse Race	Flower Bud Square
Spring	23	Flower Festival	Flower Bud Square
Spring	28	Cow Festival	Flower Bud Square
Summer	03	Beach Festival	Moonlight Beach
Summer	07	Star Festival	Varies Annually
Summer	15	Firefly Festival	Moonlight Beach
Summer	24	Fireworks	Moonlight Beach
Summer	29	Sheep Festival	Flower Bud Square
Fall	09	Moon Festival	Varies Annually
Fall	17	Fall Horse Race	Flower Bud Square
Fall	24	Harvest Festival	Flower Bud Square
Fall	30	Pumpkin Festival	Flower Bud Square
Winter	07	Chicken Festival	Flower Bud Square
Winter	12	Thanksgiving	Varies Annually
Winter	24	Fire Festival	Moonlight Beach
Winter	24	Starry Night	Varies Annually

UPGRADE TOOLS THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY

Don't waste your money buying new tools at the junk shop. Wait until Tai, the blacksmith, moves into town, then upgrade your tools through him—it's much cheaper. Tai will set up shop just west of Spring Farm after you've mined a certain amount of ore. Wait for a rainy day so you don't have to water your crops, and head to Moonlight Cave to stock up on copper, silver, and gold ore, which you'll also need as payment for the tool upgrades.

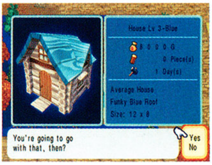
LIMESTONE COWBOY

While you're on one of your rare mining excursions in Moonlight Cave, search for limestone by smashing rocks with your hammer on the cave's first few levels. Limestones aren't worth much money, but once you've shipped 10 of them, you'll be able to purchase fertilizer at Spring Ranch. One bag of fertilizer costs 150G, and is well worth the money. Sprinkle the seed-like substance over unfertilized soil to increase the value of crops harvested on that soil by as much as double. There are three levels of fertilization in all—as a farming expert, you'll want to make sure all your crops are grown on soil that is fertilized to the maximum degree.



FATTEN UP YOUR CRIB

Every farming tycoon needs a lavish house or two. Stock up on lumber by chopping wood (or buy it at the workshop) to build new facilities or remodel your current ones. Adding on to your house means a bigger kitchen and room for more stuff.



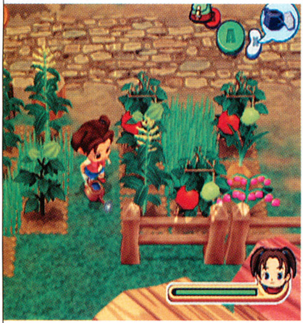
House Lv 3-Blue
8000 G
0 Piece(s)
1 Day(s)
Average House
Funky Blue Roof
Size: 12 x 8

You're going to go with that, then?

HOW SHOULD I MAKE FRIENDS?

A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS

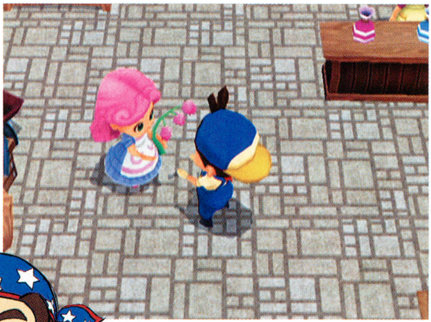
When you're not tied down to your farming duties, you have more time to build lasting friendships. You should make an effort to befriend everyone in town, including even the most frosty souls. Jamie is a particularly tough nut to crack—experiment with all kinds of gifts, particularly seasonal crops, to find out what will make your rival happy. Mayor Theodore is also a good companion to have—the stronger your bond with him, the more land you can buy at the workshop.



Even if you don't spend a lot of time working the fields, consider growing an eclectic mix of crops to give away as gifts. The seasonal seed mixes work great. Also, upgrade your cabinet and refrigerator so you can stock up on presents.

NO NEED TO GO OUT OF YOUR WAY

Even a homebody has to get out sometimes, and when you do you'll notice that there are other people in Flower Bud Village—lots of 'em! Don't waste your time chasing after the high-maintenance types. Instead, befriend townsfolk like Nina and Ray. Nina is usually at Spring Ranch (which you must frequent anyway), and is easy to attract with flowers (which you can grow on your farm). Ray often hangs out around the river near where you live, and responds well to fish (which are easy to find).

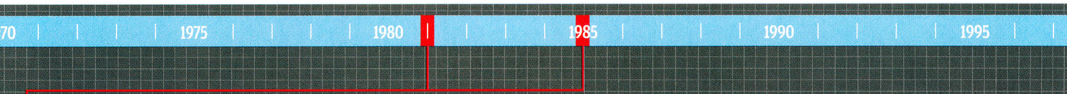


MAINTAINING FRIENDSHIPS TAKES WORK

No matter what route you take to find success in Flower Bud Village, you won't be able to do it alone. You'll need a little help from the many friends that share your happy little corner of the world. Friends are nice to have around for more than just good company—your best pals will bring you gifts, accompany you to festivals, and provide a host of other benefits. And if you can build a strong enough relationship with a certain someone, you may one day have a spouse. Do your part to build good relationships by talking to people regularly, as well as giving them products they cherish the most. The townsfolk are, for the most part, easy to find—they're often in or near their places of business. They will occasionally take their leave to another part of Flower Bud Village—the following chart will give you a good idea of where to find people.

WHERE IS EVERYBODY?

Name—Favorite Item	Location (Usually)	Location (Sometimes)
Alex—Veggie Juice	Clinic	Around the Mine
Ann—Ores	Tool Shop	Mine
Basil—Pontata Root	Outside	Mine
Blue—Good Milk	Blue Sky Ranch	Moonlight Café
Bob—Cake	Blue Sky Ranch	Perch Inn
Carl—Sweet Potato	Moonlight Café	Café Callaway
Dan—Grape	Paradise Orchard	Around the Town Square
Dia—Blueberry Juice	Clinic	—
Doug—Corn	Perch Inn	—
Duke—Potato	Moonlight Café	Outside Moonlight Café
Ellen—Breadfruit	Blue Sky Ranch	South of Blue Sky Ranch
Eve—Strawberry	Moonlight Café	Sunny Lake
Gina—Onion	Clinic	Outside the Clinic
Gourmet—Gold Milk	Perch Inn	—
Gwen—Carrot	Perch Inn	—
Hank—Good Mayonnaise	Blue Sky Ranch	Moonlight Café
Henry—Carrot	Sunny Lake	Perch Inn
Jamie—Cake	Jamie Ranch	Outside
Joe—Turnip	Workshop	River Song Heights
Katie—Apple Jam	Café Callaway	Outside Café Callaway
Kurt—Tomato	Workshop	Mine
Liz—Pumpkin	Spring Farm	Outside Spring Farm
Louis—Moonlight Stone	Junk Shop	Mine
Lyla—Pumpkin	Hearty Lyla	—
Maria—Eggplant	Flower Bud Library	Mayor's House
Martha—Wool	Clinic	—
Meryl—Gold Egg	Paradise Orchard	—
Michael—Onion	Junk Shop	Outside Junk Shop
Nami—Tomato	Near East Edge of Town	Weather Report
Nina—Bluemist Flower	Spring Farm	Outside Spring Farm
Saibara—Clay	Atelier Saibara	—
Ray—Corn	Outside	Dolphin Island
Ronald—Gold Egg	Paradise Orchard	Outside Paradise Orchard
Tai—Spinach	Blacksmith Shop	Mine
Terry—Fish	Flower Bud Riverside	Stardrop Pond
Theodore—Potato	Mayor's House	Outside
Tim—Corn	Mine	Blacksmith Shop
Woody—Eggplant	Workshop	Outside the Workshop

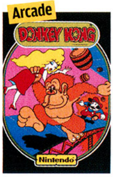


DONKEY KONG

What do the Panama Canal, mortar pies, and an Italian landlord have in common? They all had a part in the inception of Nintendo's first hit franchise.

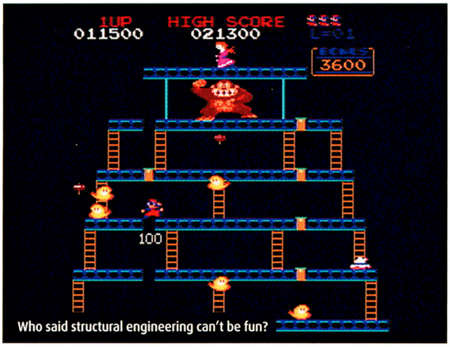
It's-a me! Jumpman!

Arcade



NES

The Original DONKEY KONG
ARCADE CLASSICS SERIES
Nintendo ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM



Who said structural engineering can't be fun?

Platform: Arcade, NES
Developer: Nintendo
Publisher: Nintendo
Release Date: 1981, 1985
Covered in Issues: 2, 61, 129, 181
Pie Factories: 0

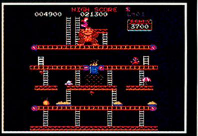
We have sluggish shipping to thank for Donkey Kong; well, sort of. It was during a months-long trip through the Panama Canal in 1980, from Japan to Nintendo's original US headquarters in New York, when the demand for the game manufacturer's latest shooter, Radar Scope, went flat. With pallets of arcade units and no one to sell them to, Nintendo of America, which was in the process of relocating to the Seattle area, replaced the software in the Radar Scope cabinets with a game created by then-fledgling designer Shigeru Miyamoto. Donkey Kong made its North American debut in 1981 at The Spot Tavern in Seattle suburb Renton, Washington. The game's kooky ape villain with his reluctant blond companion, a plucky workman, and simple but addictive play mechanics (move, jump) added up to quarter-consuming success at the test site, and national distribution to the tune of 65,000 units sold. If you play the game now, 25 years later, you'll still be taken by its charms. That first stage, in which the ape sends barrels bouncing down girders—leaving you to jump, climb, or be flattened—is the stuff of sweaty palms and quickened heartbeats. Sometimes you get a good roll—blaze by the crucial area directly under the monkey, pause at just the right moment to let the eratic zigzagging barrel pass you, and reach the peak in mere seconds. That is gaming satisfaction defined. Then there are the collapsing building and the stage with moving platforms, which requires jumping prowess and quick decision-making. A fourth stage (see the sidebar) and one of the damsel Pauline's accessories (a floppy hat) were excluded from the 1985 NES release, and every NES Donkey Kong reissue since. However, two options, which were not in the arcade title, were added to the NES version. The "A" game and the "B" game offer variations in the barrel-and-fireball patterns.

We know the game's hero as Mario today, but the directions on the arcade unit refer to him as Jumpman—a moniker that fits with Nintendo's gameplay-first philosopy. The character's resemblance to Nintendo's Seattle-area landlord at the time, Mario Segali, gave him his now-official name shortly after the arcade unit's release. Since then, Mario and DK have spawned a world teeming with characters and megahits. —George S.

DONKEY KONG
Nintendo
DONKEY KONG

The ultimate coin collector

MONKEY BUSINESS



WHO WANTS PIE?

Old-school players know the Donkey Kong stage that was left out of the NES title as "the pie factory" because of the pie-like obstacles on the stage's conveyor belts. Since the game takes place on a construction site, though, the objects are more likely trays of mortar than tasty deserts. The stage returned in 1994's Donkey Kong for Game Boy and as part of an arcade machine in Donkey Kong 64 for the N64.

GIRL TROUBLE

The arcade game called Mario's love interest "the lady," and she eventually became known as Pauline, but Mario's infatuation didn't last. Another girl appeared on the side of the Donkey Kong Jr. arcade unit.

PLUMB JOB

The mustachioed hero that appeared first in Donkey Kong has always been a working-class do-it-yourselfer, but in the three initial Donkey Kong titles, he was more of a general contractor than a plumbing specialist. Mario and his brother Luigi became plumbers in 1983's Mario Bros., which saw the pair battling baddies who emerged from pipes.

Have a favorite classic game you'd like to see revisited?
Send us your requests—we'll consider them for a future installment of Playback.
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REVIEWS

In-depth reviews of the latest games

Will Odama crush the strategy-pinball competition? Is there any competition?

Time 397
Reserve 013
Morale
Deploy

+ Sonic Riders, FIFA Street 2, Dr. Sudoku, and more.

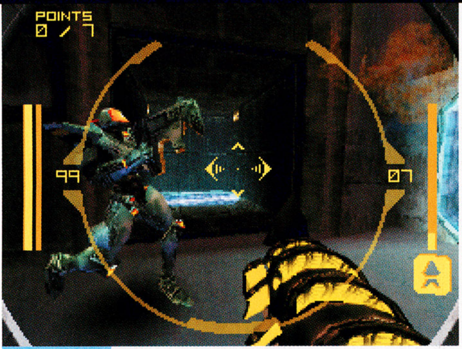
002 /030
BOOST
Lv. 1
TIME 00'16"20
3rd
LAP 1/3
RECORD 00'00"00
SPEED 155

86
Samus Aran hits the mark on her first expedition to cyberspace.

SCORE 111967 HIGH SCORE
[Limited Tetriminos]
[Use only]
Clear 5 lines total!
HOLD
NEXT
Lines left: 2

90
Tetris is ready to take over the world again. Block out some playing time.

89
Does Harvest Moon: Magical Melody play the right notes? Sing along with our review.



'ROID RAGE

SHOOTING STAR

METROID PRIME HUNTERS

RATING: 8.5

PLATFORM: NINTENDO GAMECUBE
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
DEVELOPER: NST
ESRB: TEEN

When Metroid Prime arrived on the GCN in 2002, it was labeled a first-person adventure, to focus on exploration over baddie-blasting. Metroid Prime 2 Echoes included multiplayer deathmatches, but it, too, rolled comfortably in the franchise's established adventure groove. Along comes Metroid Prime Hunters for the DS, the first of the series to flip the shooter toggle switch and emphasize the multiplayer experience with action-gaming gusto. Powerhouse Samus Aran faces off against six rival bounty hunters in both a single-player struggle and the Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection-enabled multiplayer mode.

Players are understandably wary of first-person shooters (especially on handhelds) because of an inherent awkwardness in their control schemes. Those concerns are addressed, but still valid, in MPH. The game offers two basic control types: Stylus mode and Dual mode, each with right-handed and left-handed variations. Stylus mode lets you aim and turn by touching your stylus to the screen, and move by using directional controls (either the Control Pad or the A, B, X, and Y Buttons, depending on your left- or right-handedness). Though it's tiring to hold the DS with one hand over a long duration, the controls feel natural for running and shooting challenges. Jumping is less successfully executed in Stylus mode, because it forces you either to double-tap the touch screen or to press a button with your stylus hand to catch air. Dual mode, which allows you to hold the DS with two hands, is great for running and jumping (using one directional control for aiming, the other for moving, and the L or R Button for jumps), but it takes a big hit in shooting accuracy. An option to switch control modes dynamically feels necessary, especially in the single-player game, but unfortunately, you must return to Samus's gunship to alter the control scheme.

The single-player game is linear compared to other Metroid titles, and limited to two visits to each of four locations. Instead of employing exploration-friendly tools such as the speed boost and screw attack to reach new areas, you use weapons that are affiliated with rival hunters to blast through color-coded force fields. Though the locations have missiles, ammo, and energy tanks scattered throughout, collecting power-ups seems more like a requirement for mission completion than part of the ancillary treasure hunt that many gamers expect from Metroid titles. Jumping and Morph Ball manipulation play a small (and often frustrating) role, but the meat of the game is in showdowns against rival hunters and repeated assaults on a pair of big, largely static bosses (neither named Kraid nor Ridley). It's a Metroid title as seen through a Doom and Halo filter.

The game shines in multiplayer matches, which take place in 26 arenas. Four-player matches occur locally via single-card and multi-card play, and globally via Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. Participants control their choice of seven hunters (unlockable through single- or multiplayer action), each with unique affinity weapons, alt-forms, and HUDs. The dynamics of the seven game variations (versions of deathmatch, king of the hill, and capture the flag) and the excellent arena design (though some locations are a tad large, even for four hunters) bring the excitement level of local play to fever pitch as taunts and barbs fly. Communication is also enabled in the Wi-Fi game, giving players the ability to speak and type messages to each other between matches. The elaborate Friends and Rivals feature keeps track of a player's past opponents and increases the number of options available to players who have established relationships with each other. AI-controlled bots, which the host of a local game can use to fill out the field if additional players are not available, are well-tuned in deathmatch modes, but not as smart as human-controlled hunters in more-complex games.

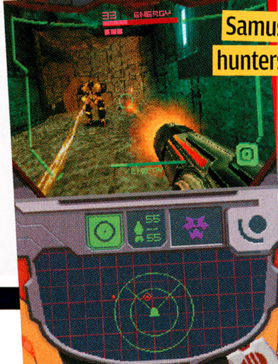
MPH's sound and graphics are as good as they get for the DS, and the two-screen movies (often showing different images simultaneously) are absolutely amazing. Fusion and Zero Mission delivered old-school Metroid thrills for Nintendo handhelds. Hunters is new-school, action-packed, and a great addition to the growing collection of Wi-Fi titles. —GEORGE S.

A SECOND OPINION

RATING: 8.0

Can a first-person shooter succeed on the DS? Before spending time with Hunters, I would have said no, based on previous FPS showings on the platform. Hunters has proven me wrong, though, with meticulously crafted controls and stunning graphics. As George pointed out, either of the game's main control schemes will take some getting used to. Seasoned gamers may have trouble letting go of the traditional FPS control configuration. But don't write Hunters off just because the DS doesn't have analog sticks—you may be surprised by how well it works.

In the multiplayer, the controls and presentation come together brilliantly by giving players all the modes, levels, and characters they could ask for in a first-person shooter. Wi-Fi play is especially great, with a huge assortment of options catering to gamers of all skill levels. Hunters is easily the most robust Wi-Fi game on the DS to date, and it's a blast to play for hours on end. Unfortunately, the game's single-player Adventure mode is not as impressive. George noted some of its un-Metroid characteristics—I'd go as far as to say that it simply lacks the variety and structure of a great single-player experience. But judging the game solely by its single-player mode would be missing the point. Like many revered shooters on the market today, Hunters was clearly designed to be a multiplayer game, and by that standard, it delivers a surprisingly worthwhile FPS experience. —ANDY M.



Samus is dealing with rival hunters the old-fashioned way: shooting them.

WRITERS' BLOCK

WHAT'S YOUR BEST SUPER MARIO BROS. MEMORY?

As the release of New Super Mario Bros. draws near, our reviewers remember their playing experiences with the original title.

CHRIS HOFFMAN

When my cousins first introduced me to Super Mario Bros., I was mesmerized. I stayed up way too late simply trying to get past world 1-2. Then Castle Greyskull fell on my head. That hurt.

STEVEN GRIMM

If what I was doing 24/7 during my freshman year in college was any clue, I was majoring in Super Mario Bros. Hmm. Who knew that I'd end up writing for NP? Guess I really did major in SMB!

CHRIS SHEPPERD

There was an arcade SMB at the corner store near my house that ate up a ton of my allowance. I think my parents got me an NES for Christmas just to keep me away from it.

ANDY MYERS

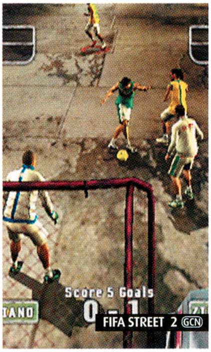
I think my mom played Super Mario Bros. more than my brother and I. She wouldn't let us near it, even though she had purchased the game as our Christmas gift. We're still bitter.

GEORGE SINFIELD

As a Game Play Counselor in the late '80s, I helped players get into the Minus World. It was a testament to the game's popularity that a program glitch could become such a big deal.

STEVE THOMASON

In 1987, my brother and I got an NES and SMB for Christmas. My brother, who was five at the time, would physically hop up and down every time he pressed the A Button. It was hilarious.



FIFA STREET 2

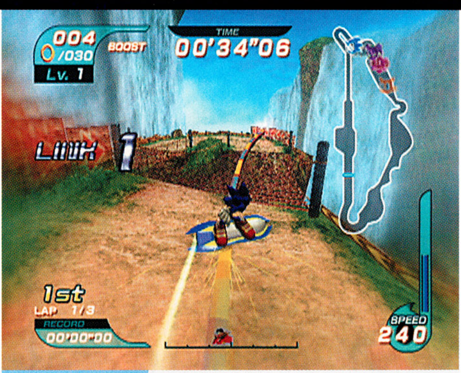
RATING: 7.0

PLATFORM: NINTENDO GAMECUBE
PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: EA CANADA
ESRB: EVERYONE

More finesse than bravado, soccer is a subtle subject for an outrageous Street title, but the second game in EA's FIFA Street series justifies its over-the-top treatment with more tricks and fireworks than the original. Ball juggling is new to the franchise, as are multiteammate combos that increase trick-point scores and ratchet up the ball speed on shots to the goal. The Gamebreaker shot has also been overhauled to incorporate a time limit and subtract from the score of the defending team what it adds to the scoring team's tally, both elements that were part of EA's first Street series—NBA Street—from the start. Play control is similar to that of the original FIFA Street title, and the franchise continues to commit the cardinal sin of taking control away from the defender during tricks that require foot choreography, such as the between-the-legs Nutmeg. The flaw is even more noticeable in FIFA Street 2 than in its predecessor because of the title's focus on tricks and aggressive AI play.

The developers get a lot more variety out of the game than you might expect. Though all of the pitches are enclosed rectangles, they have wildly different dimensions. Also, the number of rules variations (scoring games, trick-score games, etc.) is impressive.

As is the growing tradition for EA Sports, the soundtrack is excellent, offering DJ-hosted stations and a lot of international flair. —GEORGE S.



GO KICKY FAST, OK?

ROAD 'HOG

SONIC RIDERS

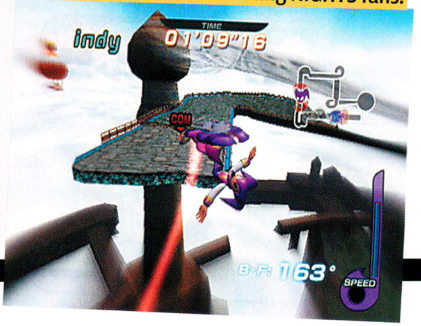
RATING: 8.0

PLATFORM: NINTENDO GAMECUBE
PUBLISHER: SEGA
DEVELOPER: SONIC TEAM
ESRB: EVERYONE

It's not often you come across something new in a racing game these days, but Sonic Riders feels like nothing else in the genre. Perhaps best described as the bizarre lovechild of F-Zero and SSX, it combines the blazing speed you've come to expect from the blue blur with a simple trick system and a unique "turbulence" mechanic (which works sort of like drafting). It also offers three different character types—Speed, Power, and Flying—with courses that do a nice job taking advantage of these distinctions, forcing you to play to your racer's strength and offering separate shortcuts for each type. The ability to tackle a course three different ways gives the game tremendous replay value, as do the wealth of play modes and secret goodies to unlock (hidden characters and bonus tracks here will make hardcore fans think they've died and gone to Sega heaven). Though the game is brutally difficult at times, once you get the hang of it and everything starts clicking, it's ultimately very rewarding.

Visually, Sonic Riders impresses with the aforementioned speed, expansive tracks, and nary a hint of slowdown (even in multiplayer mode). The techno-heavy soundtrack doesn't fare quite as well, unfortunately, and Sega really needs to do something about the voice acting in this series. It is absolutely atrocious. Not a big deal in a game like this, but it's been a problem for a long time and the franchise deserves better. Audio quibbles aside, Sonic's latest is a pretty complete package. Oftentimes games like this feel like a quick cash-in on a popular license, but Sonic Riders has the depth and good looks to succeed with or without the hedgehog. —STEVE T.

Sonic Team continues its proud tradition of taunting NiGHTS fans.



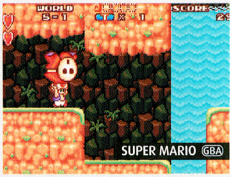
SCORE
700
7/50

ICE AGE 2 DS

ICE AGE 2 GBA

ICE AGE 2 GCN

YOSHI'S ISLAND GBA



SUPER MARIO GBA

SUPERSTAR SAGA GBA

ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN

RATING: 4.0

PLATFORM: **Nintendo DS**
PUBLISHER: **VU Games**
DEVELOPER: **Amaze**
ESRB: **Everyone**

As an extension of the movie experience, Ice Age 2: The Meltown's DS version may offer some fun moments to fans, though the lack of voiceovers and animated cut-scenes will be noticed. As a video game, Ice Age 2 completely misses the mark. The sloppy gameplay consists mostly of running around levels collecting items and trying to find your friends before a meltdown occurs. The meltdown meter on the top screen provides the only real challenge—everything else is merely a nuisance. Switching between Manny, Sid, and Diego to overcome obstacles is especially frustrating because the in-game switch pads operate only one way and are often in awkward locations. To the development team's credit, however, they've created a game that uses the capabilities of the DS in some interesting ways. (You have the option to switch from standard control to stylus control, for instance.) But the majority of Ice Age 2 is tedious and lifeless. —**Andy M.**

ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN

RATING: 5.0

PLATFORM: **Game Boy Advance**
PUBLISHER: **VU Games**
DEVELOPER: **Amaze**
ESRB: **Everyone**

In Ice Age 2, you must help three uninteresting animals escape a massive glacial flood by negotiating intricate, but otherwise nondescript, 3-D levels. Each creature has its own skill set—Sid the sloth can walk easily on ice, Manny the mammoth can push large blocks, and Diego the saber-toothed tiger can jump over gaps—and it's up to you alternate these talents to help all of them reach the goal. But, like ice itself, Ice Age 2 is solid and flavorless—considering the game is based on a popular movie, the characters should be more entertaining, and there's virtually no sense of adventure or peril. Navigating the mazelike maps to get all the creatures to safety can be quite difficult; unfortunately, it's more frustrating than fun. Fortunately, younger gamers (or older ones with a short fuse) can skip levels freely if they want to experience the monotony of the repetitive level design more quickly. —**Chris S.**

ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN

RATING: 5.0

PLATFORM: **Nintendo GameCube**
PUBLISHER: **VU Games**
DEVELOPER: **Eurocom**
ESRB: **Everyone 10+**

Scrat, the wild-eyed little rodent from *Ice Age*, never has it easy. He's relegated to a supporting role in the films, he's always taking abuse and suffering pratfalls, and now he's starring in the GCN version of Ice Age 2: The Meltdown, where he must endure a 3-D platformer that does little to separate itself from the crowd. Not to say the game's bad—between its pretty visuals, decent level design, and genre-standard moves like double jumps and butt-thwomps, IA2 is as solid as a glacier—but it's also easily forgettable (and relies too much on arbitrary item collection). More variety, such as playing as Scrat's marquee costars, might have made a big difference, but unfortunately, only Sid the sloth makes a playable guest appearance, and it's in a single minigame at that. —**Chris H.**

GAGA FOR SAGA

MONEY MATTERS

NINTENDO PLAYER'S CHOICE GBA

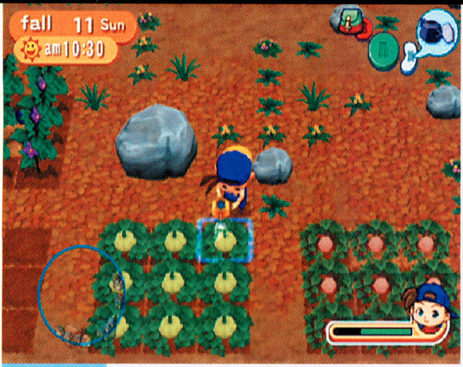
Super Mario Advance
Yoshi's Island: Super Mario Advance 3
Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga

PLATFORM: **Game Boy Advance**
PUBLISHER: **Nintendo**
DEVELOPER: **Nintendo**
ESRB: **Everyone**

I've got an axe to grind when it comes to critics. No matter what they review (games, movies, music), most lose touch with Joe Public when it comes to value: It's important to consider how much *game* you get for your dollar. It's natural—reviewing year in, year out, we consume all we want. But most gamers can squeeze a purchase into their tight budget only now and then. *Value* is why Capcom's recent Player's Choice release of Resident Evil 4 (MSRP, $19.99 u.s.) and Konami's recent GBA Castlevania Double Pak (MSRP, $29.99 u.s.) really turn my head. Games of high caliber plus a hugely lowered price score well with the gaming public, so Nintendo's decision to expand its Player's Choice series to GBA (MSRP, $19.99 u.s.) is sweet music to my ears.

This year's first three Choice titles—Super Mario Advance, Yoshi's Island: Super Mario Advance 3, and Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga—were already great values when they hit the GBA. The two SMA titles—the handheld debuts of the NES's Super Mario Bros. 2 and the SNES's Yoshi's Island—are both long, joyful platformer romps on first play-through that also offer long-term replay value for completists. The original games were also both enhanced for their GBA releases: SMA added voices to all four playable characters, SMA3 included new island levels, and each game stuffed in the addictive Mario Bros. arcade game. So at the new Player's Choice price, the value skyrockets, and it soars even further when you figure in the retro value of seeing critters Birdo (SMA) and Yoshi (SMA3) strut their stuff for the first time.

Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga, developed by AlphaDream, is the greatest value of all three, since it's one the best RPGs on any system released in recent memory. Speeding through the story takes upwards of 25 hours, and soaking up all the sights, sounds, and side quests can last much longer. The story itself is one of the grandest celebrations of all things Mario ever seen in a game, and the comedy value alone (did you ever hear the one about Luigi and Princess Peach's dress?) is nearly priceless. If you're like we critics, glutting on a game a day, you'll know all this already. But if you're on strict game rations like most people, the GBA Player's Choice library will keep you well-fed for months. —**Steven G.**



CORN STAR

BUMPER CROP

HARVEST MOON: MAGICAL MELODY

RATING: 9.0

PLATFORM: **Nintendo GameCube**
PUBLISHER: **Natsume**
DEVELOPER: **Marvelous**
ESRB: **Everyone**

Natsume isn't exactly a prolific publisher—if we're lucky, we see one or two new titles a year from the quiet little company. You have to wonder what the heck Natsume is doing during the long gaps between releases. But after you play Harvest Moon: Magical Melody, it'll start to make sense. So many aspects have improved from the previous Harvest Moon games, and Magical Melody exhibits such remarkable production quality, that the time it's taken Natsume has obviously been well spent.

Magical Melody is so packed with people, places, and stuff to do that at first it's a bit overwhelming—you'll want to engage in all of the activities right away. And unlike some previous Harvest Moon games, you don't have to wait for certain fixed events to dive headfirst into anything you feel like. In the mood for fishing? Grab the rod and head to the river. Wanna meet the townsfolk? Start going door to door and introducing yourself. This freedom is a result of some fundamental changes that Natsume has made to the venerable franchise. No longer is the protagonist tied to farming success—indeed, if you never spend a single moment trying to earn money, you can still enjoy Magical Melody for days. That doesn't mean Magical Melody has forgotten its Harvest Moon roots—farming and animal-rearing can still be an integral part of your activities, and in fact these tasks have never been so approachable or rewarding. You just don't *have* to do any of that stuff—you can make plenty of money exploring the caves and bringing back ore and gems, or spend hours along the shore catching elusive fish. Or don't. Spend the entire day exploring, visiting the neighbors, and attending festivals. It's this kind of open-ended, do-whatchu-feel-like gameplay that makes the game so ridiculously addictive—you can make every day feel like a brand-new experience.

Other fundamental improvements to the Harvest Moon formula should bring fans disenchanted by recent offerings back into the fold. Navigating around narrow fields and handling repetitive tasks has been greatly streamlined—you can now move side-to-side along a row of crops, and as you do so a square icon will appear to ensure you're digging, weeding, or watering precisely where you want. Another huge change is that when you accidentally drop a potentially valuable object in the wrong place, it doesn't disappear into the ether—it slowly fades away, giving you a chance to pick it back up. You're also no longer tethered to a single plot of land—as you progress through the game, you'll have the opportunity to expand and diversify your farming empire around the whole town. It might not sound like much, but anyone familiar with the Harvest Moon series understands how awesome little advancements like these can be.

One advancement without much impact, however, is the much-hyped ability to choose between playing as a boy or a girl (a feature that hasn't been in a Harvest Moon game since Harvest Moon 3 for Game Boy Color). The townspeople don't even change their dialogue depending on whether you're playing as the boy or the girl. There's an equal number of potential significant others on each side of the gender line . . . and one person that could go either way. And the boy and girl don't have any specific traits that affect your daily chores.

Clearly, not everything is perfect in Flower Bud Village. Natsume still struggles with decent localization—the villagers are rather dull and provide little assistance with your day-to-day life. It's easy to compare Magical Melody with the GCN hit Animal Crossing (and the debate over which one is better can now officially begin), but localization is one category that Animal Crossing wins hands down.

In addition to the normal gameplay mode, there's a collection of multiplayer minigames, but they're not all that fun. They're really just a way to keep your friends entertained when they visit—all you want to do is tend to your cows and sheep. The game doesn't suffer for the minigames' inclusion, however—you wouldn't miss them if they weren't there, and you might someday be glad they're included. It would have been nice to visit other people's villages a la Animal Crossing. We can only hope that Natsume doesn't wait so long to bring the next great Harvest Moon.
—Chris S.

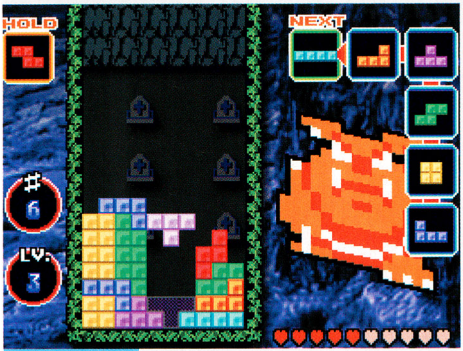
A SECOND OPINION

RATING: 9.5

I love me some Harvest Moon. Having played just about every installment in the series, I have to agree with Chris—Magical Melody is easily the best. But drawing parallels between Harvest Moon and Animal Crossing? To an HM vet, that's like comparing apples to oranges. There's no denying that Magical Melody borrows from AC in terms of art direction, and that AC's localization is far superior, but these aspects matter little in the context of Harvest Moon. Take Harvest Moon 64, for instance. The graphics are nowhere near N64 standards, and Natsume didn't even spell its own name right on the title screen; yet its status among fans is legendary. For a game like Animal Crossing, in which the crux of the game is interaction, it makes sense to put a lot of effort into the dialogue. In Magical Melody, the things your fellow townspeople say are intentionally fleeting—there just isn't time to stop and smell the flowers when you're farming, fishing, and mining away like a madman (or madwoman).

My only beef with Magical Melody is that many of the basic tasks are a bit on the easy side compared to previous HM titles. But the game is so huge and there's so much extra stuff to do, you'll barely even notice. Nearly every aspect of Harvest Moon has been expanded upon and perfected in Magical Melody, and the inclusion of a basic plot serves as a great way to track your progress. This truly is the game Harvest Moon fans have been waiting for.
—Andy M.

Look out, there's a new legend of the river king in town.



WORLD WIDE WAR

TETRIS NIRVANA

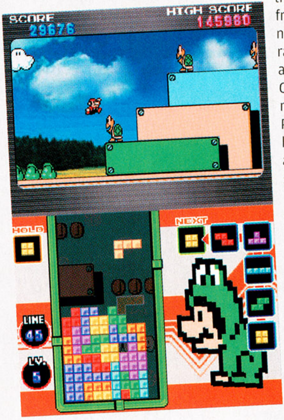
TETRIS DS

RATING: 9.5

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
DEVELOPER: **NINTENDO**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

What makes a puzzle-action game incredible? Not just good, but so awesome that it rises above the annual crop? It takes a lot more than it did in 1989, when Tetris exploded on the Game Boy scene, and no title has matched its intensity since. So it's befitting that Tetris DS finally does the trick, partially because the game has a killer combo of original Tetris gameplay and new takes on Tetris that are truly inspired. It's also partially because Tetris DS sprinkles every game mode with retro Nintendo eye candy. Necessary? Maybe not, but the Nintendo faithful will get a big kick out of bumping into the sights and sounds of 8-bit titles like The Legend of Zelda, Super Mario Bros., and Donkey Kong.

But what makes Tetris DS *genius* is how the game draws people in with its multiplayer modes—specifically, Standard mode. As a single-player game, Standard mode is original Tetris (clearing lines by guiding and spinning seven kinds of falling blocks) with all of the tweaks that have been added over the years (soft drops, hard drops, last-second spins, swapping blocks into a hold cache). It's fun stuff that's been brought to life solidly on the DS with superb play control. In a multiplayer session, however, classic Nintendo power-ups come into play. Mushrooms cause other players' blocks to fall faster; Boos let you turn off your opponents' ability to view the block queue; bananas flip fields horizontally; and lightning fries others' ability to spin their blocks. It's all wonderfully evil Nintendo-style sabotage that enriches the standard Tetris method—clearing lines on your field throws blocks into others' fields. Two power-ups benefit your field: Red shells race in to obliterate your lowest layers of blocks. And a Starman, the most wicked of all, prevents others from sabotaging your field while giving you a steady supply of the "I block," the four-tall skinny block that speeds the process of clearing lines. It all adds up to a Tetris game with the multiplayer intensity of Mario Kart. The only flaw is that you can't use items in solo mode.



Tetris DS's multiplayer genius also stems from how easy the game makes it to find other players. With one game card, you can start up a local-wireless Standard session for up to 10 players. Over Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection, you can engage in Standard matches with up to four others who have the game, either against friends or worldwide opponents who match your skill ranking. Download Play and Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection support other modes as well: two-player Push sessions over both local wireless and Wi-Fi, and 10-player Mission sessions over local wireless.

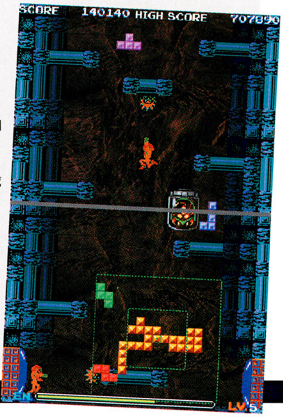
Aside from Standard mode, Tetris DS offers five more ways to play Tetris. Two of them are nicely designed for players who like the puzzle side of puzzle-action titles: In Puzzle mode, you'll choose one of several blocks to drop into a cluttered field—there's no spinning and no guiding; the idea is to select them in the right order. Though the early puzzles are easy, the back half of the 200 puzzles are brain-benders. In the 100% stylus-guided Touch mode, you'll slowly demolish a supertowering pile of Tetris blocks by poking and prodding them into place to complete lines. It's easy in early levels, but in later ones you can drag blocks left and right only (no spinning), which makes the towers fiendishly difficult.

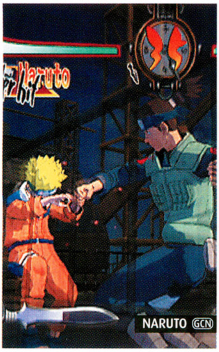
Of the three remaining modes that gravitate to the action side, Mission mode turns up the heat by adding tasks to the standard challenge, ranging from easy stuff like completing a line with a specific block to difficult things like completing a line at a high altitude. Mission mode's action boils over in multiplayer, where the first player to complete the task wins a point; it's fantastic for veteran players. In Push mode, you'll fight against the CPU or another player in a reverse tug-of-war where you gain ground by completing lines in the middle of the field. It's the most-fun Tetris invention since Tetris itself was created.

Tetris DS's action-oriented Catch mode will be the controversial one. One NP staffer considers Catch a silly idea for Tetris; others (like me) find it refreshing. You don't spin a block into place; you fly the block *pile* around the falling blocks to catch them. You don't complete lines; you complete solid four-by-four masses, which then explode. It is the perfect Tetris . . . as played in Bizarro World. What makes it even cooler is how old-school Metroid is tied to gameplay: As you steer your flying block pile up a shaft, you'll pass Metroids among the falling blocks. If you fly well and build efficient masses, you can channel the explosions toward the Metroids. But if the aliens fall past your mass, your life meter will take a hit.

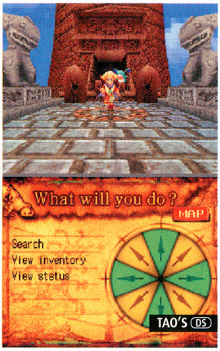
Tetris DS has appeal for Tetris purists, for people who want action, for puzzle-minded players, and for anyone who likes to see Tetris try to outdo itself. You may not love all of it, but you will love much of it, because it offers a whole lot more to love than Tetris did back in '89.

—**STEVEN G.**





NARUTO GCN



TAO'S DS

NARUTO: CLASH OF NINJA

RATING: 7.0

PLATFORM: Nintendo GameCube
PUBLISHER: Tomy/D3PA
DEVELOPER: Eighting
ESRB: Teen

Naruto fans will be happy to know that Naruto: Clash of Ninja is easily the best fighting game based on an anime license to reach North America. The GCN-exclusive title (currently on its fourth iteration in Japan) channels gameplay elements from Soul Calibur and other fighting games, while retaining the look and feel of the Naruto anime series with its beautiful graphics and high-quality voiceovers. Stack the game's fighting system up against others in the genre, though, and it will likely feel pretty basic. There aren't a lot of moves to learn, the combos don't offer much of a challenge, and there's only a small amount of diversity among the handful of playable characters. Still, Clash of Ninja manages to be fun whether you're a fan of the series or not. It doesn't add a whole lot to the fighting genre, but it's a rewarding game with a well-tuned fighting system and loads of replay value. Believe it! —Andy M.

TAO'S ADVENTURE: CURSE OF THE DEMON SEAL

RATING: 6.0

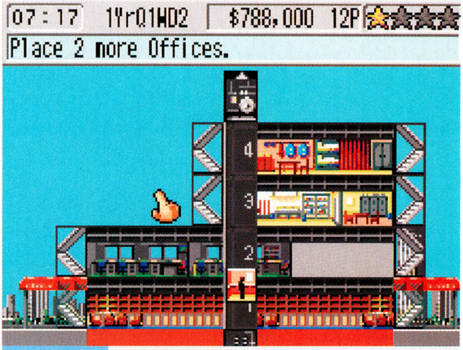
PLATFORM: Nintendo DS
PUBLISHER: Konami
DEVELOPER: Konami
ESRB: Everyone

Tao's Adventure should be fun—it features a decent storyline about a boy who must save his home world by traveling to a place that fears and loathes his kind. His only chance to succeed is by befriending and earning the trust of the locals while growing stronger through his journeys. The game features many of the typical RPG trappings, such as a broad monster list and plenty of weapons and items. But so much of what we take for granted in a DS RPG is inexplicably missing.

The most apparent problem is that an inventory system is virtually nonexistent. There is no simple way to organize your items, summon familiars, or swap your equipped weapon. And these are all things that you must do constantly—for example, your magic ability is based on the item you hold, so you frequently have to switch between magic-casting rods and your more combat-ready sword. When you absolutely must deal with the inventory screen, you have to contend with poorly executed touch-screen controls. People saw the DS touch screen as a great method to remedy problems with RPGs, but Tao's Adventure only makes those problems worse.

The game suffers in other areas, as well. The fixed camera leaves a lot to be desired—Tao often disappears behind half-transparent walls, only to be attacked by a virtually unseen enemy. The dungeon terrain is difficult to decipher—you often can't tell whether you are within striking range of an enemy. And the second screen is totally wasted by a giant round wheel intended for character movement, forcing many of the character stats to be crowded around the action on the main screen.

We still have high hopes for RPGs on the DS, but the many obvious flaws of Tao's Adventure left us disappointed. —Chris S.



Place 2 more Offices.

TALL ORDER

MIDDLE MANAGER

THE TOWER SP

RATING: 7.0

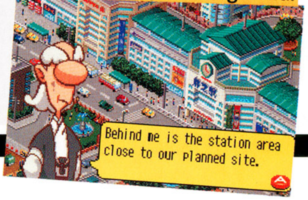
PLATFORM: Game Boy Advance
PUBLISHER: Sega
DEVELOPER: Vivarium
ESRB: Everyone

Plucked from PC gaming's past, SimTower has a new lease on life on the GBA as The Tower SP. Players weaned on Rollercoaster Tycoon and Zoo Tycoon will recognize common elements: facility development, building maintenance, and money management. Instead of setting up elephant habitats and setting the price of cotton candy, though, you establish offices and repair elevators. The subject is undeniably dry, and for the first few hours of gameplay, your options are severely limited. But a midgame shift that lets you go into the hotel and cinema businesses adds much-needed color (it's not elephants and cotton candy, but it's still fun). The game's pacing picks up at that moment, too. In the early going, you'll find yourself waiting (and fast-forwarding the game clock) to collect weekly rent from office tenants so you can purchase more offices. But the businesses that come in after the shift give you a daily cash infusion, and they don't close on weekends. The pacing remains fairly slow, but the spare moments give you time to clean the restrooms and plant bug bombs to kill off cockroaches.

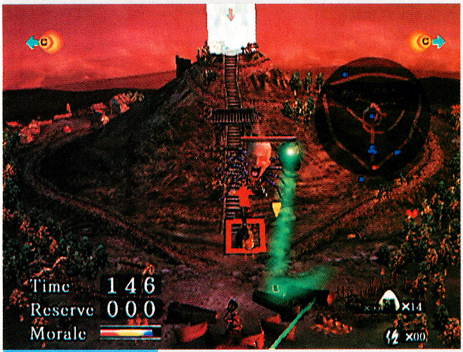
The midgame shift also gives you more options and more real estate to build on. Your impulse may be to rearrange established businesses and pieces of your infrastructure. You can clear away objects, though unlike other games of its type, The Tower does not refund any of the cash that you spent creating the items you relocated or removed. That means that both making mistakes and making smart expansion choices are very costly. Also, severe restrictions on where you can place elevators, escalators, and a train station will make you want to start from scratch rather than try to unsnarl congestion with your existing building.

Yama (the CEO of your construction company) gives you helpful, funny, and sometimes-cryptic advice during the tutorial and periodic inspections, adding entertainment value. And the game's detailed graphics look great on the GBA screen, if not a tad too dense. The foundation is there for a sound game, but the lack of options and activities can make The Tower SP feel more like a fixer-upper than prime real estate. —George S.

Yama compensates for his baldness by letting his eyebrows go wild.



Behind me is the station area close to our planned site.



PIKMIN OR PIKEMEN?

BOWLED OVER

ODAMA

RATING: 8.5

PLATFORM: **Nintendo GameCube**
PUBLISHER: **Nintendo**
DEVELOPER: **Vivarium**
ESRB: **Everyone 10+**

Odama is astonishing. Though designed by Yoot Saito, the visionary who made the Dreamcast's surreal virtual-life sim Seaman, Odama is in every sense a Nintendo game. And despite being extraordinarily challenging in that way that makes die-hard gamers totally addicted but can drive off casual players, it is a game that every Nintendo fan *must* play.

Time 194
Reserve 047
Morale

In combining pinball with real-time siege strategy, Odama lives up to Nintendo's philosophy of innovation more than some first-party Nintendo games. Even if it were nothing beyond a pinball game, Odama would still be something to get excited about: Many of its 12 pinball fields push pinball design far beyond anything we've seen before. Though Odama's battlefields are dressed up in the medieval Japanese period, underneath the stone walls, wood ramparts, and thatched huts, you can see classic pinball design, where a set of flippers is at the bottom of the field, bumper points abound, and certain spots result in jackpots. But in Spider Temple, halfway through the game, Odama does things that will mesmerize pinball wizards. It's the game's first 360-degree field, where the goal is to besiege a temple atop a steep hill. Four sets of flippers are stationed around the hill to allow you to attack the slopes from all directions, and if you whack the pinball into another quadrant, you can simply roll the camera to view that portion of the field. Soon after that battle, Odama returns to a single set of flippers, but it takes the radical approach of uprooting them for a trip through a sprawling medieval village, where you use the pinball to raze buildings.

Time 211
Reserve 000
Morale

Odama would also turn heads if it were only a real-time strategy game, since its microphone-guided troop command is truly cutting edge. (The game comes with the Nintendo GameCube Mic.) The goal on each battlefield is to order your troops to either defeat a boss or push your clan's military bell through a distant gate. Some commands direct your tiny bell-carrying crew, urging them right, left, forward, back, or to a halt, while your nearby soldiers protect the crew. Other voice commands rally your soldiers to key targets around the field (like the bell or a boss), or order them to confront enemy masses in three ways: muscling them backward, wedging through their center, or flanking and destroying them. Two more commands open and close river floodgates, totaling 11 commands that provide a gripping level of real-time siege control. Mic-based troop control is so new that it takes some getting used to, but the payoff is worth the learning curve.

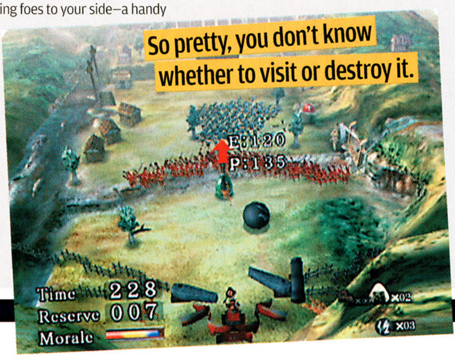
Where Odama shines the brightest—and where it gets itself into a little trouble—is in the way it fuses both of its brilliant ideas together. Your troop strategy requires you to use the pinball (the Odama) to bash down the enemy's battlements and mow down his waves of soldiers. Simultaneously, your pinball strategy requires you to guide your troops to key points, such as secondary flippers that they can seize, and to get them out of the way of your Odama, which can mow them down just as easily as it does enemy troops. Some power-ups, however, let your Odama pass through your soldiers temporarily while converting foes to your side—a handy tactic for replenishing your troops. On the downside, simultaneous mic-and-pinball gameplay is so fresh that it makes the learning curve, already steep for troop control, frustratingly steep at first. On the upside, after you play through the game once (by the skin of your teeth), you'll find it fascinating to replay the whole campaign or any of the 11 battlefields in Freeplay mode, in fuller command of the controls.

This place seems unfortified, my liege, but looks deceive.

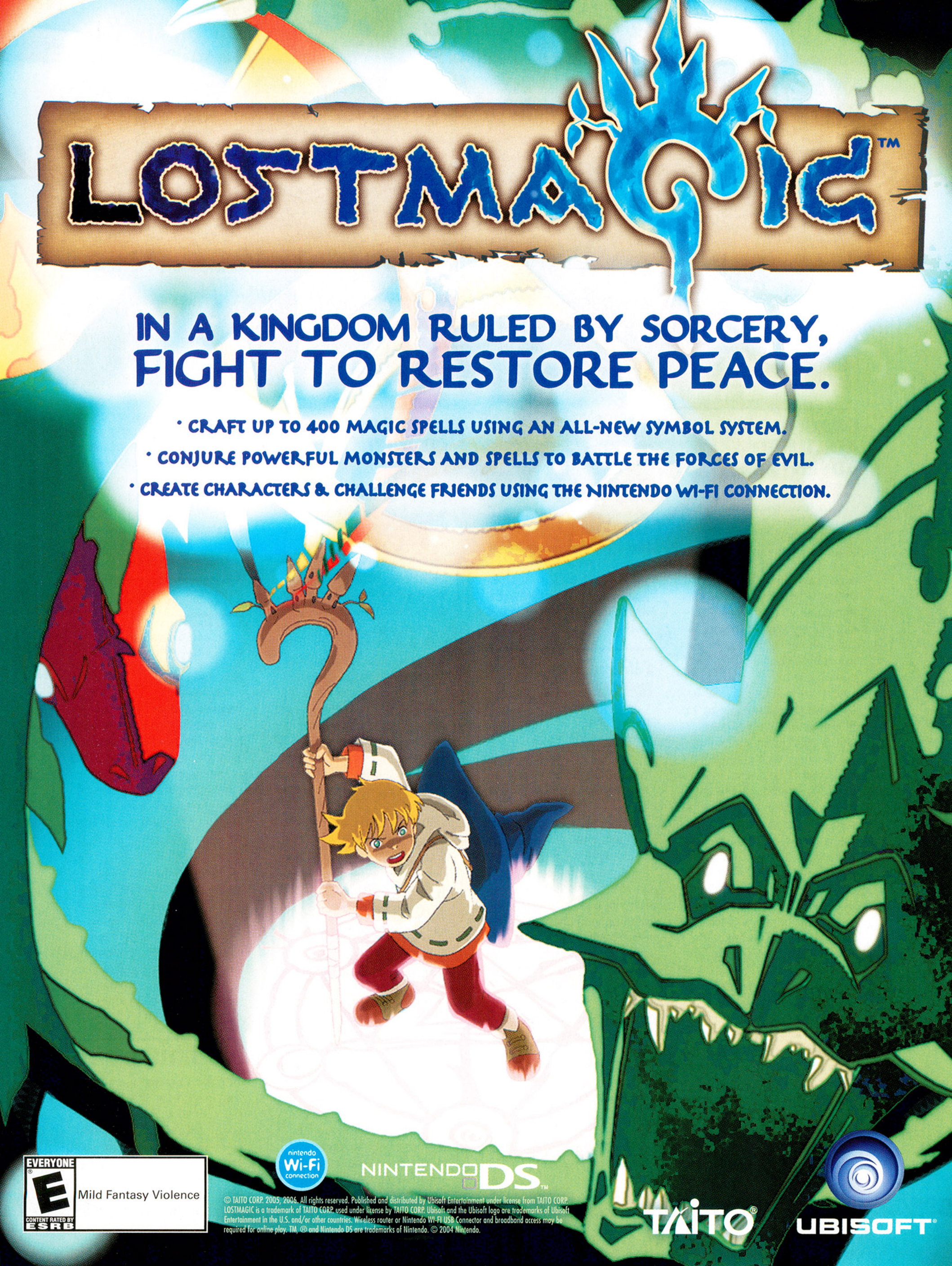
Innovation aside, there's a greater reason that Odama is a *Nintendo* game through and through. It's about Nintendo itself. Your medieval clan name? Yamanouchi, a slight variation on the surname of Hiroshi Yamauchi, the man who transformed his family's business—Nintendo—from playing cards to video games. The doctrine that guides your medieval clan? Ninten-do, the Way of Heavenly Duty. Yes, Odama is all about Nintendo's (fictional) heritage and living the Way of Ninten. And as you play through the story, which involves getting revenge against a trusted vassal that stole Yamanouchi territory in a coup, your campaign will even take you to . . . well, that would be a major spoiler. Somewhere *very* Nintendo, let's say. So, in the end, Odama isn't just a great game—it's a gift to reward the Nintendo faithful. And for that reason alone, it's one of the most exceptional games you'll see in the Nintendo GameCube era.

—**Steven G.**

The mighty general will be as a field mouse, trapped in our jaws!



So pretty, you don't know whether to visit or destroy it.



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E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
Mild Fantasy Violence

nintendo Wi-Fi connection

NINTENDO DS™

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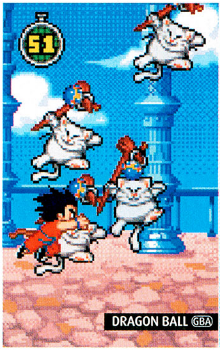
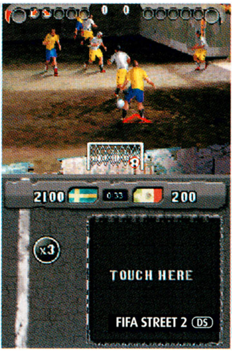
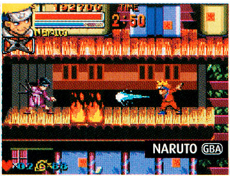
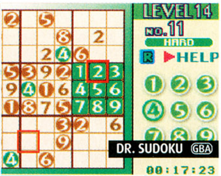

DRAGON BALL (GBA)

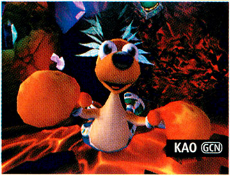


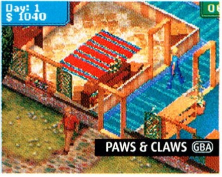
FIFA STREET 2 (DS)


NARUTO (GBA)



DR. SUDOKU (GBA)


KAO (GCN)



PAWS & CLAWS (GBA)

DRAGON BALL: ADVANCED ADVENTURE

RATING: 7.0

PLATFORM: Game Boy Advance
PUBLISHER: Atari
DEVELOPER: Dimps
ESRB: Everyone 10+

Not only is Dragon Ball: Advanced Adventure the best Dragon Ball game yet released, it's also an enjoyable, good-looking, technique-filled action game in its own right that's held back only by a misguided shot at diversity and innovation.

For the most part, Dragon Ball has never been better. Taking young Goku through his side-scrolling beat-'em-up paces is mindless fun—the clobber-'em-all-and-move-on gameplay harkens back to a less-complex era of gaming—but is filled with enough moves to keep things interesting for a while, including standard melee attacks, throws, dive kicks, defensive moves that deflect enemy projectiles, and meter-draining super attacks, such as the requisite Kamehameha. Goku even has a wall jump that adds an extra layer of depth and allows for some nifty exploration, even if it is woefully underutilized. Additionally, power-ups that increase Goku's health bar, special-attack meter, and attack potency provide a nice feeling of character growth, but it's too bad his move set doesn't evolve as well; despite Goku's respectable arsenal, the repetitious action starts to wear thin by game's end.

Unfortunately, Advanced Adventure's primary attempt to shake things up doesn't quite work out. The inclusion of one-on-one combat for some of the saga's key moments, such as boss fights and Goku's two ascensions through the World Martial Arts Tournament, is good in theory but flawed in execution. In addition to being supershallow, the versus combat revolves around a clumsy system that renders defense useless (your resistance gauge depletes whether you block or not), and the battles devolve into cheap button-mashing frenzies. These lackluster confrontations don't ruin the game, but they certainly detract from what's otherwise a fun, action-packed experience. —Chris H.

FIFA STREET 2

RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM: Nintendo DS
PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: EA Canada
ESRB: Everyone

Though the GCN version of FIFA Street 2 is touting trick play as its main feature, the DS version takes a bare-bones approach to four-on-four street soccer. You can pull off tricks to avoid tacklers, but the touch screen's trick stick is less responsive than the GCN controller's C Stick. Since your right hand is meant to manipulate the pass and shoot buttons, as well as the touch-screen stick, it's much too awkward to hold a stylus, leaving you to use your thumb on the touch screen instead. Also, though the combos and Gamebreaker build-up of the GCN version give you incentive to pull off fancy moves, tricks are primarily evasive maneuvers in the DS game. The camera is closer to the action than it is in the GCN game, which affords you a good view of the athletes but means you won't see the goal until you are very close to it. Slow goal keepers ensure high scores and an exciting enough experience. —George S.

NARUTO: NINJA COUNCIL

RATING: 4.0

PLATFORM: Game Boy Advance
PUBLISHER: Tomy/D3PA
DEVELOPER: Arc System Works
ESRB: Everyone 10+

Naruto might be the next big thing in anime, but you wouldn't know it from the Game Boy Advance adaptation. Between loose controls, iffy collision, a small selection of moves, and tactically empty boss fights, Naruto: Ninja Council hardly provides the kind of thrills I'd expect from a side-scrolling martial-arts-themed action game. Admittedly, the ability to run up walls is cool, but other elements that could have added more depth, like varied projectile weapons and elemental magic, fail to add any strategy since you can carry only one type at a time. Even the visuals disappoint; it looks like it's running on last-gen technology. Multiple characters and unlockables provide some incentive to play, but only the most devoted *Naruto* die-hards need apply. —Chris H.

KAO THE KANGAROO: ROUND 2

RATING: 2.5

PLATFORM: Nintendo GameCube
PUBLISHER: Atari
DEVELOPER: Tate Interactive
ESRB: Everyone

Of all the old mascots to exhume, why Kao the Kangaroo? The marsupial's non-awaited comeback is even worse than his forgettable 2001 debut, marred by sloppy controls, bland visuals, and one of the most uninspired adventures in recent memory. The developers took every platforming cliché in the book and executed them about as poorly as you can imagine. In one level, you can actually slide off blocks of ice into lava. That's right, ice. Floating on top of lava. The character designs for Kao and friends couldn't be less interesting, and for a game that stars a boxing kangaroo, it sure doesn't offer many foes to engage in fisticuffs. This boring mess of a sequel should KO the franchise for good. Let's hope no one coughs up Bubsy next. —Steve T.

DR. SUDOKU

RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM: Game Boy Advance
PUBLISHER: Mastiff
DEVELOPER: Success
ESRB: Everyone

If there's one thing I've learned from Dr. Sudoku, it's that sudoku puzzles are both fun and challenging; if I've learned another, it's that without some variety, sudoku can get old fast. With 1,000 puzzles of varying difficulty plus the ability to create your own, Dr. Sudoku should keep fans of the numeral-based puzzle game occupied for a long, long time, but unlike Sudoku Fever (reviewed in Vol. 202), Dr. Sudoku doesn't offer any puzzle types aside from the traditional nine-by-nine grid. On the other hand, Dr. Sudoku does offer the much-appreciated ability to take in-game notes. If you have a yearning for pure sudoku in video game form, Dr. Sudoku will provide a cure, but more options and a sharper presentation would have gone a long way. —Chris H.

ALSO THIS MONTH

THQ's **Paws & Claws Resort (GBA)** is Zoo Tycoon for the kitten and bunny set. . . . Another animal friendly THQ release, **Let's Ride! Dreamer (GBA)**, puts players in the saddle with Dakota Fanning for a movie-inspired horse-riding simulation.

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[ARCHIVE]

SMALL WONDERS

Though late winter is a slow period for releases traditionally, DS and GBA titles entering the Archive this month are part of a handheld boom that has continued to go strong through the season. Resident Evil: Deadly Silence (8.5) brings the thrills of the survival-horror game that started it all to Nintendo's two-screen terror, and Pokémon Trozei (8.5) adds to the system's already great selection of puzzle games. Tales of Phantasia (8.5) puts another great old-school RPG on the GBA.

Scores reflect individual reviewers' opinions.

Title	Score	Publisher	Vol.	ESRB
NINTENDO GAMECUBE				
American Chopper 2: Full Throttle	5.0	Activision	201	T
Batman Begins	6.5	Electronic Arts	194	T
Battalion Wars	8.5	Nintendo	197	T
Bratz: Rock Angelz	N/A	THQ	198	E
Cabela's Dangerous Hunts 2	2.5	Activision	200	T
Cabela's Outdoor Adventures	6.5	Activision	198	T
Call of Duty 2: Big Red One	7.5	Activision	200	T
Chaos Field	6.0	O~3	200	E
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	2.5	Global Star	195	E
Chibi-Robo	8.0	Nintendo	201	E10+
Chicken Little	6.0	Buena Vista	198	E10+
The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe	5.5	Buena Vista	199	T
Crash Tag Team Racing	7.0	VU Games	198	E10+
Curious George	7.0	Namco	202	E
Dance Dance Revolution: Mario Mix	7.5	Nintendo	198	E
Digimon World 4	7.0	Bandai	193	E
Dora the Explorer: Journey to the Purple Planet	N/A	Global Star	198	EC
Fantastic Four	6.0	Activision	194	T
FIFA Soccer 06	9.0	Electronic Arts	197	E
Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance	9.5	Nintendo	197	T
Frogger: Ancient Shadow	5.5	Konami	197	E
From Russia with Love	7.0	Electronic Arts	199	T
Geist	5.0	Nintendo	196	M
Gun	8.0, 8.5	Activision	199	M
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	8.5	Electronic Arts	199	E10+
Harvest Moon: Another Wonderful Life	7.5	Natsume	195	E
Hello Kitty: Roller Rescue	5.0	Namco	196	E
The Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction	8.5	VU Games	196	T
The Incredibles: Rise of the Underminer	7.5	THQ	198	E10+
International Golf and Tennis	3.0	Ignition	193	E
Karaoke Revolution Party	8.0	Konami	199	E10+
Kids Next Door: Operation V.I.D.E.O.G.A.M.E.	N/A	Global Star	198	E10+
Killer 7	8.5	Capcom	193	M
Knights of the Temple	5.0	Aspyr	194	M
Lego *Star Wars*	6.5	Eidos	198	E
Madagascar	6.0	Activision	194	E10+
Madden NFL 06	9.0, 8.0	Electronic Arts	195	E
Mario Party 7	7.5	Nintendo	199	E
Mario Superstar Baseball	9.0	Nintendo	196	E
Mark Davis: Pro Bass Challenge	5.0	Natsume	198	E
Marvel Nemesis: Rise of the Imperfects	7.0	Electronic Arts	197	T
Medal of Honor: European Assault	8.0	Electronic Arts	194	T
Mega Man X Collection	8.5	Capcom	200	E
Midway Arcade Treasures 3	6.5	Midway	197	E
Namco 50th Anniversary Arcade Collection	7.0	Namco	197	E10+
NBA Live 06	5.5	Electronic Arts	198	E
Need for Speed: Most Wanted	8.0	Electronic Arts	199	T
NHL 06	8.5	Electronic Arts	198	E10+
Nicktoons: Nicktoons Unite!	N/A	THQ	198	E
One Piece: Grand Battle	6.5	Bandai	197	T
Pac-Man World 3	7.0	Namco	199	E
Peter Jackson's King Kong	9.0	Ubisoft	200	T
Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness	8.5	Nintendo	197	E
Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones	9.0	Ubisoft	200	M
Scooby-Doo!: Unmasked	7.5	THQ	197	E
Shadow the Hedgehog	8.0	Sega	199	E10+
Shrek Superslam	N/A	Activision	199	E10+
The Sims 2	8.5	Electronic Arts	199	T
Sonic Gems Collection	8.5	Sega	195	E
Spartan: Total Warrior	8.5	Sega	197	M
SSX On Tour	8.0	Electronic Arts	198	E10+
Super Mario Strikers	7.5	Nintendo	199	E
Tak: The Great Juju Challenge	8.5	THQ	197	E
Teenage Mutant Ninja turtles 3: Mutant Nightmare	4.0	Konami	199	E10+
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 06	9.0	Electronic Arts	197	E
Tony Hawk's American Wasteland	9.0	Activision	198	T
True Crime: New York City	8.0	Activision	199	M
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger: Night of the Quinkan	6.0	Activision	198	E10+
Ultimate Spider-Man	9.0	Activision	198	T
Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble	6.5	Capcom	199	T
World Series of Poker	4.5	Activision	198	E10+
WWE: Day of Reckoning 2	8.0	THQ	197	T
X-Men Legends II: Rise of Apocalypse	7.5	Activision	198	T
Zatch Bell!: Mamodo Battles	6.0	Bandai	198	T
NINTENDO DS				
Advance Wars: Dual Strike	9.5	Nintendo	196	E
Age of Empires: The Age of Kings	8.0	Majesco	201	E10+
Animal Crossing: Wild World	9.5, 8.5	Nintendo	199	E
Battles of Prince of Persia	6.5	Ubisoft	200	E10+
Blades of Thunder 2	4.5	Summitsoft	201	E10+
Bomberman	7.0	Ubisoft	194	E
Burnout Legends	N/A	Electronic Arts	199	E
Bust-a-Move DS	7.5	Majesco	200	E
Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow	9.0	Konami	197	T
The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe	7.0	Buena Vista	199	E10+
Dig Dug Digging Strike	7.0	Namco	198	E
Dragon Ball Z: Supersonic Warriors 2	5.0	Atari	199	E10+
Dragon Booster	6.0	Konami	200	E
Electroplankton	8.5	Nintendo	200	E
Elf Bowling 1 & 2	N/A	Ignition	200	T
FIFA Soccer 06	8.0	Electronic Arts	198	E
Finding Nemo: Escape to the Big Blue	5.0	THQ	202	E
Ford Racing 3	N/A	Destination	198	E
Franklin's Great Adventures	N/A	American Game Factory	200	E
Frogger: Helmet Chaos	5.0	Konami	196	E
Golden Nugget Casino DS	6.5	Majesco	201	T
GoldenEye: Rogue Agent	6.0	Electronic Arts	195	T
Greg Hastings' Tournament Paintball Max'd	N/A	Activision	201	E10+
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	8.0	Electronic Arts	199	E
The Incredibles: Rise of the Underminer	5.5	THQ	199	E10+
Kim Possible: Kimmunicator	6.0	Buena Vista	198	E
Kirby: Canvas Curse	9.0	Nintendo	194	E
Lost in Blue	8.0	Konami	197	E10+
Lunar: Dragon Song	7.0	Ubisoft	197	E10+
Madagascar	7.0	Activision	194	E
Madden NFL 06	8.0	Electronic Arts	196	E
Mario Kart DS	9.0	Nintendo	199	E
Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time	9.0	Nintendo	199	E
Marvel Nemesis: Rise of the Imperfects	5.0	Electronic Arts	198	E10+
Mega Man Battle Network 5: Double Team DS	7.0	Capcom	198	E
Meteos	9.0	Nintendo	194	E
Metroid Prime Pinball	9.5	Nintendo	198	E
Monopoly/Boggle/Battleship	7.0	Atari	200	E
Nanostray	8.0	Majesco	195	E
Need for Speed: Most Wanted	6.0	Electronic Arts	199	E
Nicktoons: Nicktoons Unite!	N/A	THQ	198	E
Nintendogs	8.5, 8.0	Nintendo	196	E
Pac-Man World 3	3.0	Namco	200	E
Pac 'N Roll	7.5	Namco	196	E
Peter Jackson's King Kong	3.5	Ubisoft	200	T
Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney	8.0	Capcom	197	T
Pokémon Trozei	8.5	Nintendo	202	E
Puyo Pop Fever	6.0	Atlus	193	E
Real Time Conflict: Shogun Empires	7.0	Namco	198	E10+
Resident Evil: Deadly Silence	8.5	Capcom	202	M
The Rub Rabbits!	8.0	Sega	201	T

REVIEWER NOTES

TALES OF PHANTASIA

The depth of Namco's Super Famicom RPG behemoth, now a GBA title published by Nintendo, is nothing short of amazing. The game starts slow, and the battle-system play control feels nonresponsive. But hours, then days, into the adventure, everything comes together. The game's last third is especially satisfying—you get the ablity to fly all over the game world, and the story draws toward its large-scale conclusion.

—George S.

>DRILL DOZER

If we're overdoing it with Drill Dozer endorsements, it's because we're genuinely enthusiastic about the game. It's been a while since a single title has been unanimously adored by the NP staff. DD's unique gameplay and funky characters put it near the top of our list of all-time best GBA games.

—Andy M.

>POKéMON TROZEI

Coming out just two weeks before Tetris DS, Pokémon Trozei does the impossible by making a unique space for itself alongside the puzzle-action juggernaut. Playing Trozei is like surviving an avalanche by surfing through it. Watching Trozei is like seeing the world of Pokémon through a stylish lens, where Pokémon are . . . dare we say it?. . . cooler in an Adult Swim way. Listening to Trozei is like blissing out to techno-trance. All in all, Trozei is definitely one to catch.

—Steven G.

>CHAOS FIELD

There isn't any indication that hard-core shooter fans actually still exist, but if you're out there, Chaos Field is your dream come true. Games like this are definitely an acquired taste; if you're up to the challenge, pick this one up.

—Chris S.

SBK: Snowboard Kids	7.5	Atlus	199	E
Sega Casino	6.0	Sega	199	T
Shrek Superslam	N/A	Activision	199	E10+
The Sims 2	5.5	Electronic Arts	199	E10+
Snood 2: On Vacation	N/A	Destination	199	E
Sonic Rush	9.0	Sega	199	E
Space Invaders Revolution	4.0	Mastiff	196	E
SpongeBob SquarePants: The Yellow Avenger	3.5	THQ	198	E
Spyro: Shadow Legacy	6.5	VU Games	198	E
Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith	8.0	Ubisoft	193	E10+
Super Monkey Ball: Touch & Roll	6.5, 7.5	Sega	201	E
Super Princess Peach	7.5	Nintendo	202	E
Tak: The Great Juju Challenge	7.5	THQ	197	E
Tamagotchi Connection: Corner Shop	5.0	Bandai	201	E
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 3: Mutant Nightmare	6.0	Konami	198	E
Texas Hold 'Em Poker DS	5.0	Majesco	198	E
Texas Hold 'Em Poker Pack	N/A	Summitsoft	200	E
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Lockdown	6.0	Ubisoft	197	M
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory	8.0	Ubisoft	194	T
Tony Hawk's American Sk8land	8.0	Activision	199	E
Top Gun	4.0	Mastiff	202	E10+
Top Spin 2	6.0	2K Games	200	E
Trace Memory	8.5	Nintendo	197	T
Trauma Center: Under the Knife	9.0	Atlus	198	T
True Swing Golf	8.0	Nintendo	201	E
Ultimate Spider-Man	6.5	Activision	198	E10+
Viewtiful Joe: Double Trouble	7.0	Capcom	198	T
Whac-A-Mole	N/A	Activision Value	197	E
Worms: Open Warfare	7.0	THQ	202	E10+
Yu-Gi-Oh!: Nightmare Troubadour	8.0	Konami	196	E
Zoo Tycoon DS	7.5	THQ	197	E
GAME BOY ADVANCE				
Atomic Betty	N/A	Namco	198	E
ATV Quad Frenzy	N/A	Majesco	199	E
Backyard Football 2006	N/A	Atari	197	E
Backyard Skateboarding	N/A	Atari	198	E
Barbie and the Magic of Pegasus	N/A	VU Games	197	E
Batman Begins	5.5	Electronic Arts	194	T
The Berenstain Bears and the Spooky Old Tree	N/A	Namco	197	E
The Bible Game	N/A	Crave	197	E
Big Mutha Truckers	N/A	Destination	199	E10+
Bionicle: Maze of Shadows	N/A	THQ	198	E
Board Game Classics	N/A	Destination	197	E
Bratz: Rock Angelz	N/A	THQ	198	E
Candy Land/Chutes & Ladders/ Memory	N/A	Destination	200	E
Care Bears: Care Quest	N/A	American Game Factory	200	EC
Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance/ Aria of Sorrow Double Pack	9.0	Konami	202	T
Centipede Compilation	5.0	Destination	197	E
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	3.5	Global Star	195	E
Chicken Little	N/A	Buena Vista	198	E
Chicken Shoot	N/A	Destination	198	E10+
The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe	N/A	Buena Vista	199	E
Connect Four Compilation	5.0	Destination	197	E
Curious George	7.0	Namco	202	E
Danny Phantom: The Ultimate Enemy	N/A	THQ	197	E
Disney's Magical Quest 3 Starring Mickey & Donald	5.5	Capcom	194	E
DK: King of Swing	8.0	Nintendo	197	E
Dogz	N/A	Ubisoft	199	E
Donkey Kong Country 3	8.0	Nintendo	198	E
Dr. Mario & Puzzle League	7.0	Nintendo	199	E
Dragon Ball GT: Transformation	5.5	Atari	196	E10+
Drill Dozer	9.0	Nintendo	201	E
Driv3r	5.5	Atari	198	T
Duel Masters: Shadow of the Code	5.5	Atari	198	E
Dynasty Warriors Advance	7.0	Nintendo	196	E10+
Elf Bowling 1 & 2	N/A	Ignition	200	T
everGirl	N/A	THQ	198	E
The Fairly OddParents!: Clash with the Anti-World	N/A	THQ	199	E
Fantastic Four	6.5	Activision	194	E10+
FIFA Soccer 06	7.0	Electronic Arts	198	E
Final Fantasy IV Advance	9.0	Nintendo	200	E10+
Fire Emblem: The Sacred Stones	9.0, 9.5	Nintendo	193	E
Ford Racing 3	N/A	Destination	198	E
Franklin the Turtle	N/A	American Game Factory	200	EC

>LOST IN BLUE

Since I would quickly perish if I were stranded on a real island, I'm thankful for Lost in Blue. Once I overcame the game's learning curve, it offered a unique, engrossing experience.

—Chris H.

SONIC RUSH

I haven't had a lot of exposure to the Sonic games—I was more of a SNES guy, and left the Sega goodness to my brother. After getting my hands on Sonic Rush for a while, I'm beginning to realize what a mistake that was. Rush is fast and challenging, and looks great (thanks to the DS's Blast Processing, maybe?). I'm also surprised it didn't get better props in this year's Power Awards. —Chris S.

>MARIO KART DS

Outside of his platformers, which we're celebrating this issue, Mario's greatest achievement may be the creation of the kart racer. Each MK title has brought something new to the series. MK DS delivers depth and Wi-Fi racing.

—George S.

THE RUB RABBITS!

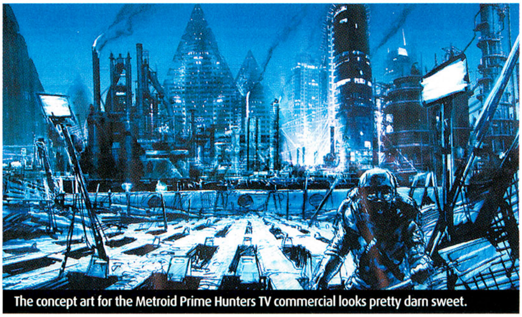
Feel the Magic was a fun, quirky launch title, but it was far too short and the whole experience felt rather incohesive. Though The Rub Rabbits! doesn't fix those problems completely, it is a definite improvement. The game is significantly longer than its predecessor (with an unlockable second story), and everything just works a bit better to create something uniquely charming. —Steve T.

Title	Score	Publisher	Vol.	ESRB
The Game of Life/Yahtzee/Payday	N/A	Destination	200	E
Garfield: The Search for Pooky	N/A	American Game Factory	200	E
Gauntlet Compilation	6.5	Destination	197	E
Greg Hastings' Tournament Paintball Max'd	N/A	Activision	200	E10+
Gumby vs. the Astrobots	5.0	Namco	196	E
Gunstar Super Heroes	9.5	Sega	198	E10+
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	8.0	Electronic Arts	199	E
Harvest Moon: More Friends of Mineral Town	8.5	Natsume	195	E
Hello Kitty: Happy Party Pals	N/A	THQ	199	E
Herbie: Fully Loaded	5.5	Disney Interactive	194	E
Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi: Kaznapped!	6.5	D3	199	E
The Incredibles: Rise of the Underminer	N/A	THQ	199	E
James Pond Codename Robocod	4.0	Valcon Games	195	E
Juka and the Monophonic Menace	5.0	Orbital Media	196	E
Kim Possible III: Team Possible	6.5	Disney Interactive	195	E
KLAX Compilation	4.0	Destination	197	E
Koala Brothers: Outback Adventures	N/A	American Game Factory	200	EC
Kong: King of Atlantis	N/A	Majesco	200	E
Kong: The 8th Wonder of the World	6.0	Ubisoft	200	E10+
The Land Before Time: Into the Mysterious Beyond	N/A	American Game Factory	201	E
Lizzie McGuire 3	N/A	Buena Vista	197	E
Madagascar	7.0	Activision	194	E
Madagascar: Operation Penguin	N/A	Activision	199	E
Madden NFL 06	7.0	Electronic Arts	196	E
Majesco's Sports Pack	N/A	Majesco	201	E10+
Mario Tennis: Power Tour	7.0	Nintendo	199	E
Mega Man Battle Network 5: Team Colonel & Team Protoman	6.5	Capcom	194	E
Mega Man Zero 4	8.5	Capcom	198	E
Millipede Compilation	5.0	Destination	197	E
Mr. Driller 2	5.0	Namco	193	E
Namco Museum 50th Anniversary Arcade Collection	5.5	Namco	197	E
Need for Speed: Most Wanted	N/A	Electronic Arts	199	E
Nicktoons: Nicktoons Unite!	N/A	THQ	198	E
The Nightmare Before Christmas: The Pumpkin King	6.5	Buena Vista	198	E10+
One Piece	8.0	Bandai	197	E10+
Operation/Mouse Trap/Simon	N/A	Destination	200	E
Pac-Man Pinball Advance	7.0	Namco	193	E
Pac-Man World 2	6.0	Destination	197	E
Paperboy Compilation	5.5	Destination	197	E
Pocket Dogs	N/A	0~3	200	E
Pong Compilation	5.5	Destination	197	E
Popeye: Rush for Spinach	5.0	Namco	193	E
Power Rangers: S.P.D.	4.0	THQ	196	E10+
The Proud Family	N/A	Buena Vista	199	E
Rebelstar: Tactical Command	7.0	Namco	197	E10+
Rec Room Challenge	N/A	Majesco	200	E
Risk Compilation	7.0	Destination	197	E
Riviera: The Promised Land	6.5	Atlus	194	T
Scrabble Blast	7.5	Destination	193	E
Scrabble Jr. Compilation	4.5	Destination	197	E
Shaman King: Master of Spirits 2	6.5	Konami	196	E 10+
Shrek Superslam	N/A	Activision	199	E10+
Sigma Star Saga	8.5	Namco	195	E10+
The Sims 2	7.5	Electronic Arts	199	E10+
Sky Dancers	N/A	Crave	199	E
Snood 2: On Vacation	N/A	Destination	199	E
Spy Hunter Compilation	4.5	Destination	197	E
SRS: Street Racing Syndicate	5.5	Destination	201	T
Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith	7.0	Ubisoft	193	E10+
Sudoku Fever	4.0	Global Star	202	E
Tak: The Great Juju Challenge	4.0	THQ	197	E
Tales of Phantasia	8.5	Nintendo	202	E10+
Teen Titans	6.0	Majesco	198	E10+
Tony Hawk's American Sk8land	6.0	Activision	199	E
Top Spin 2	N/A	2K Games	200	E
Tokyo Xtreme Racer Advance	3.5	Crave	193	E
Totally Spies!	5.5	Atari	201	E
Tringo	N/A	Crave	200	E
Trollz: Hair Affair	N/A	Ubisoft	199	E
Ultimate Arcade Games	N/A	Telegames	198	E
Ultimate Spider-Man	6.0	Activision	198	E10+
WarioWare: Twisted!	8.5	Nintendo	193	E
W.I.T.C.H.	N/A	Buena Vista	197	E
Yoshi Topsy-Turvy	7.0	Nintendo	194	E
Yu-Gi-Oh! GX Duel Academy	6.0	Konami	201	E
Zatch Bell!: Electric Arena	N/A	Bandai	198	E10+
Zooo	4.5	Ignition	196	E

BEHIND THE SCENES

ON THE HUNT

While visiting the set of the Metroid Prime Hunters commercial shoot, Nintendo.com's Matt Burke caught up with the ad's director and *Underworld: Evolution* mastermind Len Wiseman.



The concept art for the Metroid Prime Hunters TV commercial looks pretty darn sweet.

Matt Burke: Action films with female leads are on the rise, like Selene in the *Underworld* series, and in videos games, like Lara Croft, and our own Samus Aran from Metroid Prime Hunters. Why do you think audiences find these characters so appealing?
Len Wiseman: There are a lot of theories, of course, but the bottom line is that they're exciting and sexy. There is just something very appealing about a female in that kind of very strong take-charge role which was normally occupied by men in those types of media. Male audiences particularly like that kind of woman.

MB: What story details can you reveal about the Metroid Prime Hunters television spot?
LW: The concept here is to give players a sense of how high the body count is going to be in this game, the amount of mayhem, and just how vicious Samus can be. I mean, she's killing so many bounty hunters that our gravedigger here is just trying his best to keep up. He's dug thousands of graves and Samus is just dropping her victims like crazy.

MB: What kind of trademark Les Wiseman touches can we expect to see?
LW: To start, a night shoot. [laughs] But really a dark kind of eerie world, just creating a definite tone and mood that feels a bit scary, a bit grim. That's kind of become a bit of my thing, what I'm known for. Other touches like the sci-fi hi-tech with a little bit of the old-world gritty style is really what I'm into. I like to think *Underworld* plays like a period piece with automatic weapons, and we have some of the same mix here where we have these dirty industrial hardware props coupled with a hi-tech element.

MB: Speaking of props, this set has some pretty interesting pieces like the headstones. You broke into the entertainment business working with props on *Stargate* and *Independence Day*. What is your fondest memory of working on them?
LW: Actually, I have a funny story about when I started directing, which relates to my prop work. I did props for seven years. So if the director or director of photography (DP) gets angry and he yells, "Props!" you go out there and fix what you need to because that's your job as a prop assistant. So when I started directing, it took me almost two years to shed the skin of my old job. The DP on my set would yell, "Props!" and I'd jump out of my seat out of habit.

MB: Let me turn back to video games. Personally, I'm hoping an *Underworld* video game will see the light of day.
LW: A game was in the works, but there wasn't enough time to put it together and so it didn't work for the release time of the film. But I saw some of the production work. Selene looked really good. The whole game looked quite cool. So it's too bad it didn't happen, but I really hope it eventually gets made. It would make for such a very cool game because you'd be able to choose between playing a vampire or a lycan.

MP: If the game was produced, which creature would you play? Vampire or lycan?
LW: I would prefer to play a vampire. The hours are nice. You don't have to wake up too early. I mean, would you really want to be breaking into a hairy monster?

The gravedigger was filmed alone on the set; many of the TV spot's visuals will be added using CG in postproduction.

FANSITES

Feed the Meter

In our endless pursuit of ways to waste time and make it look like we're working, we spend a lot of hours surfing video-game-related websites. One such site recently caught our eye, and was just too cool not to share. Head to lifemetercomics.com to check out some of the best fan art on the Net. —**Chris S.**

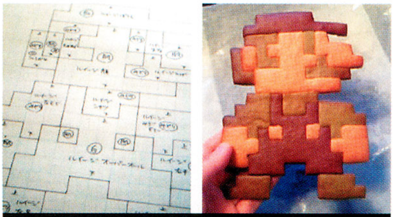
LIFE♥METER
NEWS
COMICS
ART GALLERY
ABOUT
LINKS
Art Gallery

Many of Life Meter's art contributors are professional artists.

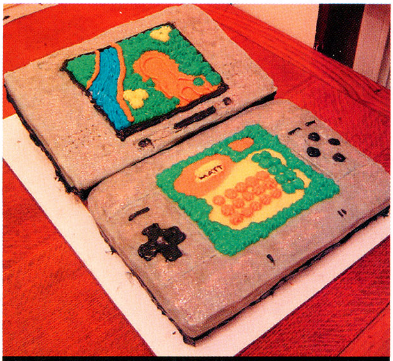
FOOD

Just Desserts

At first, biting into Mario struck us as pretty macabre, but Chris H.'s Mario timeline (pg. 28) showed us this wasn't the first time the big man has been a culinary delight. As for the Animal Crossing cake—we can report that no actual animals were harmed. —**Chris S.**



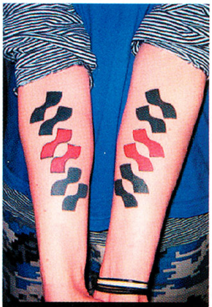
Tokyo resident Mutsumi first drafted this amazing pixel version of Mario on paper, then mushed together small squares of dyed cookie dough. The baked result was one large and tasty treat.



Kris G. sent in photos of this rad Animal Crossing-themed DS birthday cake that she and her friend Dianne made for their pal Matt.

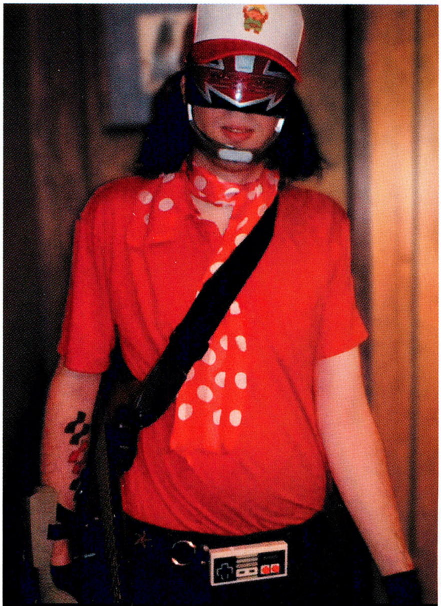
MUSIC

Not Just a Phase



Anyone with *more* than six Konami logos tattooed on his arms? That's what I thought!

Who's the crazy guy with old-school Konami logos tattooed on his arms? That's Shawn Phase, a musician who performs shows and releases home-made CDs under the name Temp Sound Solutions. Don't confuse Shawn's musical endeavors with other video-game-influenced bands like Minibosses or NESkimos—though he's played shows with both, Shawn is in a class all by himself, mixing elements of metal, electronic music, and samples with covers of tunes from 8-bit video games for a bizarre yet strangely satisfying culture clash. Shawn has been called the Kurt Cobain of 8-bit, and we can definitely see why. His music has a dirty, low-fi sound reminiscent of early Nirvana, yet it somehow incorporates elements of video game music from games like Spy Hunter, Hogan's Alley, Final Fantasy, and Blaster Master. The songs on his newest CD (which contains more than 60 tracks) come and go quickly, but are strung together seamlessly with strange noises and samples from movies such as *The Wizard*. If this all sounds very odd, that's because it is. Check out Shawn's music at tempsoundsolutions.com.
—**Andy M.**



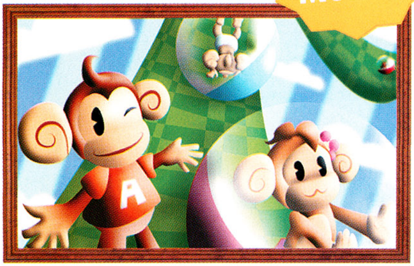
Shawn's unique onstage fashion includes an NES controller for a belt buckle, and a Power Glove (which stays on while he's shredding on guitar).

ONLINE

Monkey Biz

The quantity of entries in this month's fan-art contest was a little light. C'mon, people—step it up! A big thanks to those who did submit Super Monkey Ball artwork—we went bananas over the computer-drawn submissions in particular.

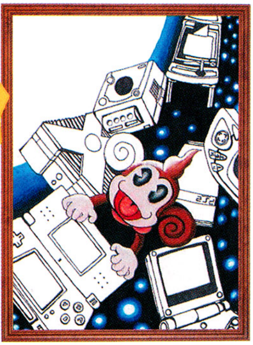
FEBRUARY'S COMPUTER-DRAWN ART OF THE MONTH



ARTIST: CRYSTALFAIRY12

SUBJECT: SUPER MONKEY BALL

FEBRUARY'S HAND-DRAWN ART OF THE MONTH



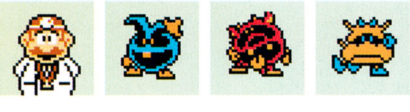
ARTIST: THETRUELEGEND

SUBJECT: SUPER MONKEY BALL

Looking to submit art for the first time, and not sure what to do? Visit **forums.nintendo.com** for details. Be sure to read the rules before you post your masterpieces.

Custom-Made Avatars

By Cory Conner



Sage Reviews

A good review goes beyond what people already know—be original, and back up your opinions with examples.

Sage Review of the Month

Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance

reviewed by JOE136

Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance is definitely one of the Nintendo GameCube's greatest titles of 2005. Path of Radiance marks the first time Fire Emblem will venture its way into the 3-D world of gaming, and also the first time the RPG franchise has come to home consoles in America.

Path of Radiance tells of a time when only the continent of Tellius remains in the world. All other pieces of land were submerged in water by a dark god many years ago. The story unfolds with a young warrior named Ike, who is training with his father Greil, the commander of Greil Mercenaries. Ike, along with the Greil Mercenaries, eventually finds himself in the middle of a great war between two countries of Tellius.

The battling in Path of Radiance plays similar to its predecessors. Battle objectives in every chapter of the epic tale can include seizing a location, defeating a boss, or simply lasting a certain number of turns. Battles can go on for nearly an hour, but they will never feel dull or slow-paced. On the contrary, they are always fun and entertaining to play.

Graphics are a joy to behold, especially the cut-scenes. Sixty different tunes within the game fit any situation throughout the great plotline. Over 40 different characters to play as, along with three difficulty settings, gives the game plenty of replay value.

What's a Sage?

Sages are members of the NSider online community that are put through the wringer and hand-picked by Nintendo. They get tons of special privileges, including opportunities to review games for Nintendo Power magazine.

Wonders of the Web

We might be opening up a big can of worms with this one, but if you have an awesome video-game-related website that you think deserves notice in Community, forward us the link. We'll review the site and maybe give you some props in a future issue. This would be a good time to beef up your servers!

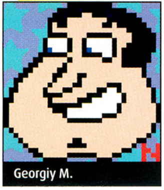
Pokémon Blast-Off!

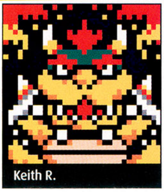
There's only one place you need to go for all the information about Pokémon 10th Anniversary festivities and events: pokemon.com! Right now you can check out the 10-week celebration going on at Space Center Houston in Houston, TX, which runs from early March through May 14. The show includes Trading Card Game events, extra-large movie showings, and chances to catch Pokémon into Pokémon gamepacks. You won't want to miss it!

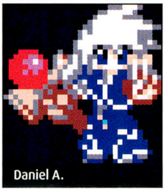
Kart Art Gallery

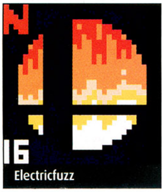
In Volume 200, we asked our readers to send in photos of their custom-made Mario Kart DS avatars. Below is a sample of the many masterpieces we received, carefully re-created for your viewing enjoyment. —ANDY M.

Keep 'em coming, kart fans!
Send photos of your Mario Kart DS avatars
to wifi_community@nintendopower.com.

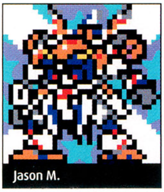

Georgiy M.

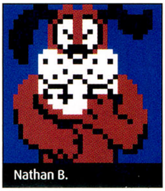

Keith R.

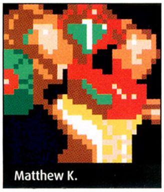

Daniel A.

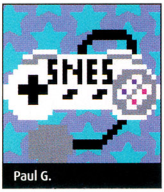


Electricfuzz

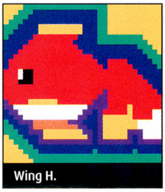

Jason M.

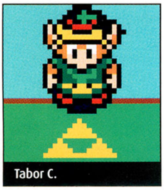

Nathan B.


Matthew K.



Paul G.


Wing H.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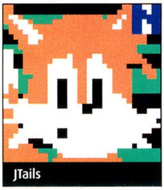
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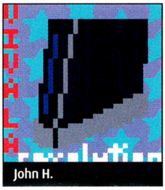

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MARIO AND LUIGI: PARTNERS IN TIME

TAMING OF THE SHROOB

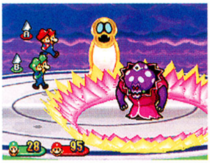
Partners in Time may star a pair of infants, but the final boss—the Elder Princess Shroob—is no child's play. To help a brother out, we've compiled a battle plan for putting an end to her tyrannical reign. Who loves ya, baby?

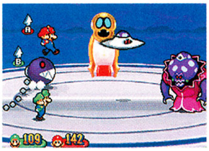
Round One

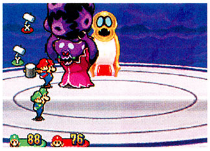
HP: 3,000

The Elder Princess Shroob is accompanied by UFOs that she can utilize for certain attacks. From time to time, Princess Peach will toss stars to the bros, which they can use to shoot down the flying saucers. If you aim carefully, you can take out multiple UFOs at once. When the boss has two saucers available to her, she can ride them to the upper screen and fire energy bursts down at the heroes. Watch her arms to see which brother she's targeting (right for Mario and left for Luigi). Afterward, she'll fly into the distance and continue firing from there. If she's lined up with her throne, the shots will go over the siblings' heads; otherwise, you'll have to jump over the blasts. At the end of her assault, the Elder Princess Shroob will land, creating a shockwave that both brothers must jump over simultaneously. Her evil majesty can also command a UFO to guide a Chain Chomp toward the bros. The Chomp will go after one of them, then attack the other from behind unless you stomp on it.

On her own, the princess will approach one of the brothers while carrying a giant meteor over her head. Hammer the boss repeatedly until she drops it. On occasion, she may also try to bum-rush one of the siblings. To counterattack, quickly wind up the targeted brother's hammer as the princess charges across the screen. Once you've weakened her wicked highness considerably, she'll start to drink healing potions. Pound her with Bros. Items to dish out more damage than she can recover from.







Round Two

HP: 3,000

Tentacle HP: 248

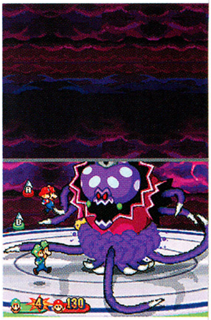
Leg HP: 248

Crown HP: 350

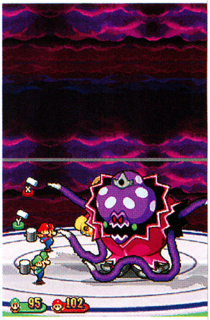
After taking 3,000 points worth of damage, the Elder Princess Shroob will transform into an even bigger, more-powerful monstrosity. In her altered state, the boss is protected by a crown. Before you can damage her, you must attack the crown until it turns grey. The other areas you can target—her legs and tentacles—don't count toward her main HP, but destroying them will temporarily diminish her offensive capabilities. Mix Flowers are great for damaging the crown, legs, and tentacles all at once. Alternatively, you can use Copy Flowers to target the crown specifically.

The princess uses her tentacles (see the captions), plus a few additional means of attack. She'll occasionally belch noxious clouds of purple gas that the bros must hop over. Like before, she'll also summon UFOs. This time, however, she'll shoot down the saucers herself so they crash into Mario and Luigi. Pay attention to the order in which she hits the craft, because they'll come down in the same sequence. UFOs that catch on fire will head toward Mario, and those that short-circuit will plummet toward Luigi.

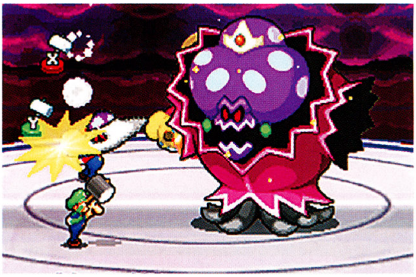
If a large energy ball appears on the top screen, keep track of the red and green orbs that fly into it. The color the ball absorbs most of indicates who it will fall on first. Hammer it with the corresponding bro, then the other, to send it back at the princess.



When the boss spins her tentacles along the ground, hop over them with both bros in quick succession.



Jump to dodge the tentacles when they make a sound and sparkle. Hammer them when they move forward slowly and try to grab the bros.



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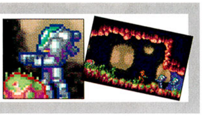

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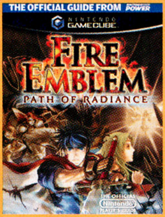

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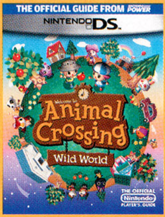

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As mysterious as a new moon, the follow-up to one of 2005's best DS titles is a whip-smart adventure that you won't want to miss.

PIPE DREAM

A 2-D platformer for the 2000s, New Super Mario Bros. is retro gaming reborn. We have new details in a mega-Mario-sized feature.

BOY IN A BUBBLE

Aiai is on the loose in Sega's Super Monkey Ball Adventure. Find out how he rolls outside the bounds of the party-puzzle formula.

YOOT MOVEMENT

What kind of mad genius would think of feudal Japanese pinball warfare? We peer into the mind (and really big bell) of Odama's Yoot Saito.

+ *From Arcades to Art Galleries*

I AM 8-BIT BURST ONTO THE ART SCENE LAST YEAR WITH AN EXPLOSION OF RETRO IMAGERY. NEXT MONTH, WE'LL PREVIEW THIS YEAR'S SHOW.

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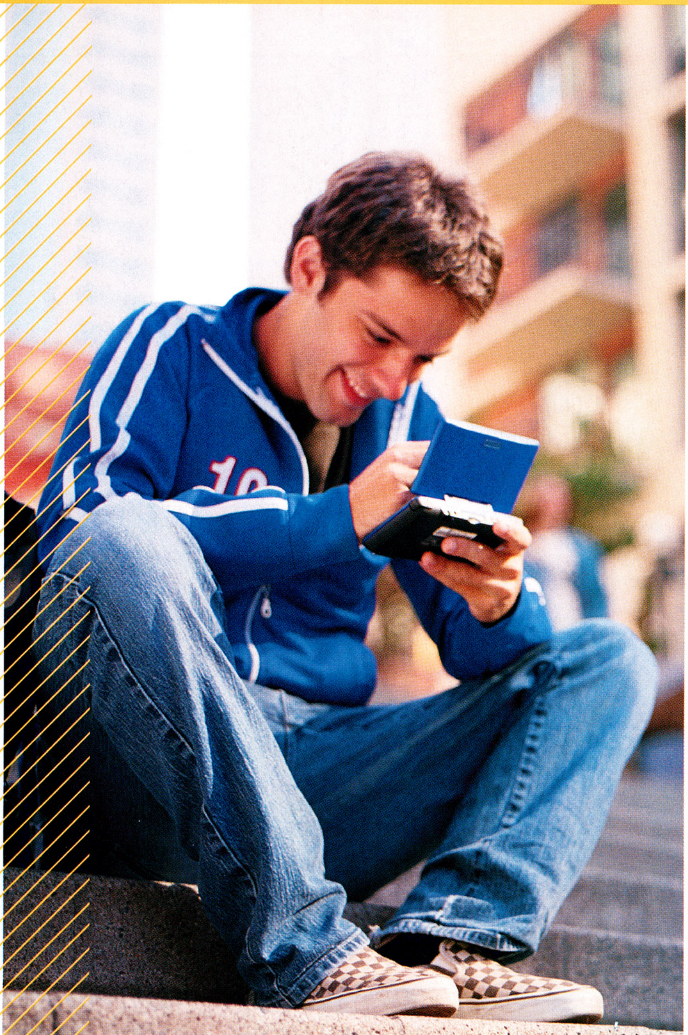

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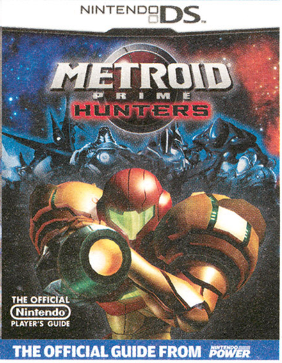
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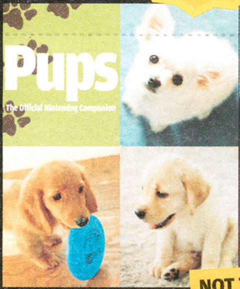
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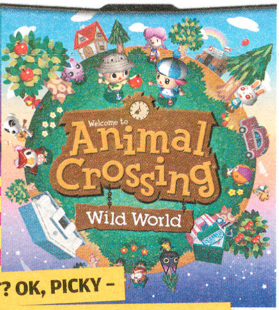
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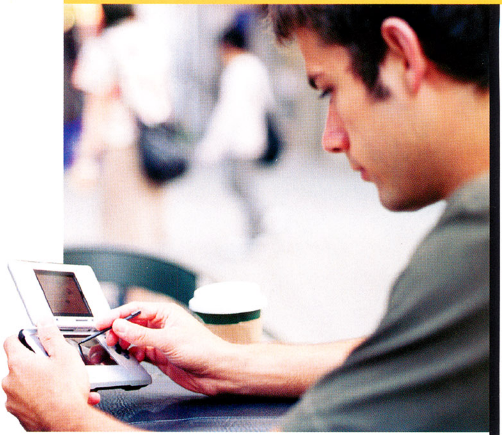

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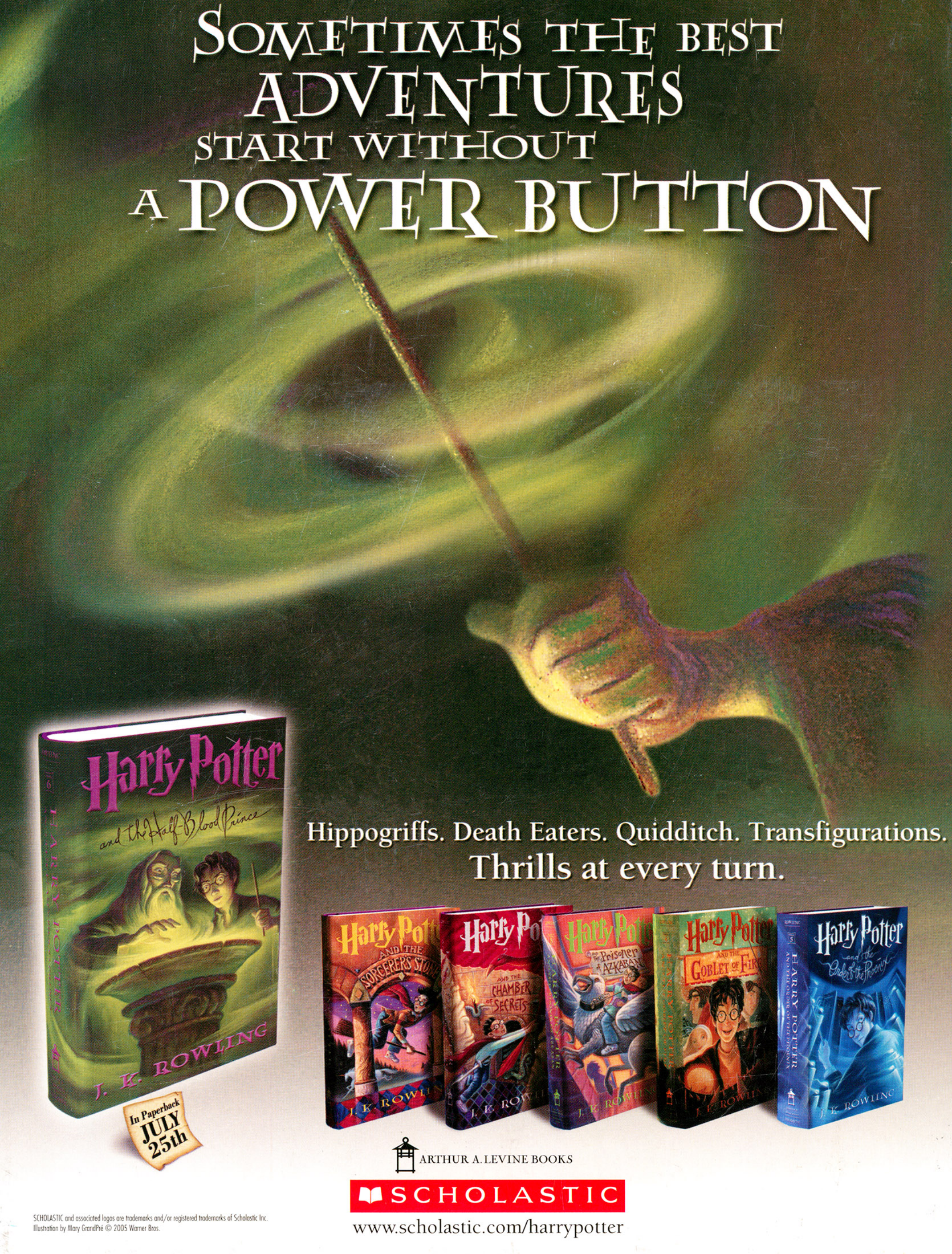
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